Rapid Appraisal Sociolinguistic Survey among the NGEMBA Cluster of Languages: Mankon, Bambili, Nkwen, Pinyin, and Awing

Bamenda, Santa, and Tubah Subdivisions
Mezam Division
North West Province

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REFERENCES
1 INTRODUCTION

Research for this report was carried out May 24 to June 3, 2000 in the region around Bamenda, North West Province, Cameroon. Members of the research team were: Charlene and Michael Ayotte (SIL), Dr. Zaché Dénis Bitjaa-Kody (U. of Yaoundé 1), Edward and Elizabeth Brye (SIL), Dr. Engelbert Domché-Teko (U. of Dschang), Melinda Lamberty (SIL), Solange Orabe, and Marcelle Tanga (linguistics students). This survey aimed to get an overall view of current trends in the Ngemba languages, identifying changes since the last survey nine years ago (Sadembouo, and Hasselbring 1991). For detailed research objectives, see section 1.2.2.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance and welcome that we received from regional and local government officials, school representatives, church leaders, and traditional rulers, without whose cooperation this mission would not have been possible.

1.1 Location

The languages of the Ngemba cluster are spoken in Mezam Division of the North West Province. Following is a map of the geographical distribution of the Ngemba languages (adapted from Breton, and Fohtung 1992:133; shading indicates the speech varieties featured in this report).

Map 1: Languages in Mezam Division

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>division</th>
<th>subdivision</th>
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<tr>
<td>913 Mankon</td>
<td></td>
<td>mbili</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>916 Bamba</td>
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</table>
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Mezam division, NW Province, Cameroon
1.2 The Cluster Approach to Languages

1.2.1 Summary of Previous Research
A lexicostatistical analysis survey of the Ngemba languages was the first part of a more comprehensive study of the Ngemba group by Lawrence Seguin (1989:1) since the work of Atlas Linguistique du Cameroun, or ALCAM (Dieu, and Renaud 1983). In the conclusion to his report, he suggested following the ALCAM classification rather than the then current Ethnologue entries. He recommended intelligibility testing on the Ngemba cluster by measuring comprehension of the more influential varieties of Ngemba, especially Mankon (Mankunge dialect of Bamenda) and Bafut among the less dominant Ngemba language groups (pp. 11–12).

Sadembouo, and Hasselbring (1991:22) concluded that Bafut could serve as a standard for itself, Bambili, and Bambui; and that a Mankon written standard could serve all the other Ngemba varieties, including Mundum, but excluding Pinyin and Awing (25–27). They reported that all of these speech varieties are viable and that linguistic attitudes toward the mother tongue and other Ngemba languages are positive (23). The authors recommended modifications to ALCAM and the Ethnologue. They suggested creating a new language name, Ngemba or Bamenda, which lists Nkwen, Mendankwe, and Alatening as dialects. They believed that Bambili-Bambui constitute one language that should occupy an entry separate from Ngemba.

A survey of Bamukumbit concluded that this language is not part of Awing but a distinct language in its own right (Seguin, and Mbongue 1994:12).

1.2.2 Definition
Linguistic and sociolinguistic research in SIL is increasingly oriented toward a grouping approach. Each speech variety is viewed more comprehensively in the context of others. Language survey and development is guided by the principle that the researcher should aim toward treating languages and dialects in families or clusters. This accounts for the dynamics of linguistic interrelationships in the midst of great diversity. This rationale drives language survey and explains why the following report includes many of the Ngemba languages.

1.2.3 Research Objectives for the Cluster
The goal of this survey was to get a current overview of the language use patterns, intergroup relationships, and language attitudes of each of the major Ngemba languages. More specifically, the researchers approached this survey with several questions in mind:

- What are the language use patterns and attitudes among the Awing, Pinyin, Mankon, Mendankwe, Nkwen, Bambili, and Bambui peoples? Could Mankon translation and literacy extend to these other groups?
- How vital is the Mankon speech variety, and what are the people’s attitudes toward mother-tongue translation and literacy?
- Do Bambili and Bambui speakers believe that they have one common language, that is inherently intelligible? Could they use the Bafut literature? Would they be open to Bafut literacy efforts?
- Do speakers of Nkwen and Mendankwe perceive themselves as having one common language?
- How much contact do Pinyin and Awing peoples have with each other? Are they open to sharing one written standard? How similar are these two languages, and how well do the groups understand each other?

1.3 Linguistic Classification and Ethnologue Information
The Ethnologue (2000) reflects research findings subsequent to the publication of ALCAM in 1983. This explains the differences between the two classifications, compared in table 1. A word list comparison matrix in appendix 3 lends support to the clustering of all Ngemba languages.

1.3.1 ALCAM
ALCAM (p. 352) assigns the following classification to the entire cluster: Niger-Kordofan, Niger-Congo, Bénoué-Congo, Bantoïde, Bantou, Grassfield, East-Grassfield, Ngemba. ALCAM (78–79) divides the seventeen speech varieties within the Ngemba Cluster into seven major groups. It includes Bamukumbit as a dialect of Awing, although subsequent research has proven that it should be regrouped with the neighboring languages of Bafanji, Bambalang, Bamali, and Bamenyam (Seguin, and Mbongue 1994).
1.3.2 Ethnologue

The *Ethnologue* (Grimes 2000:48) classifies all of the languages of the Ngemba cluster as follows: Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Wide Grassfields, Narrow Grassfields, Mbam-Nkam, Ngemba. In the *Ethnologue*, Ngemba is used as the name of a language cluster and the name of one language belonging to this cluster. Under the Ngemba listing, Grimes seems to imply that the dialects of Mundum, Mberewi, and Anyang together make up one language separate from Ngemba, with which all the Mankon dialects are mutually intelligible. See appendix 1 for the complete *Ethnologue* listings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGES</th>
<th>DIALECTS</th>
<th>DIALECTS</th>
<th>LANGUAGES</th>
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<td>Ethnologue</td>
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<td>ALCAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Mberewi (Mundum 1)</td>
<td>Anyang (Mundum 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bagangu (Akum)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Njong</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mbutu</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mangkunge</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Alatening</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bagangu (Akum)</td>
<td>Njong</td>
<td>Mbutu</td>
<td>Songwa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mbutu</td>
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<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songwa</td>
<td>Shomba</td>
<td>Mamkupa</td>
<td>—</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bambui</td>
<td>Mbui</td>
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<td>Mendankwe</td>
<td>Mendankwe</td>
<td>915 Nkwen</td>
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<td>917 Awing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Bamunkumbit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Boldface type in this table indicates speech varieties that are the focus of this survey.*

1.4 Demographic Situation

Interviewers asked for the estimated population at each group interview. In every case, the fon himself was present and verified the number. There are wide discrepancies between the self-reported population estimates and official figures derived from the 1987 government census (See table 2 following.) Neither set of figures may reflect reality, but the 2000 projections are more likely accurate than the self-reported estimates.
Table 2: Population Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People Group</th>
<th>1987 Census</th>
<th>2000 Projection</th>
<th>Self-Reported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BAMENDA TOWN</td>
<td>95,445</td>
<td>138,400</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Mankon²</td>
<td>29,029</td>
<td>42,100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mankon proper</td>
<td>12,953</td>
<td>18,800</td>
<td>&gt;100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bambili</td>
<td>4,573</td>
<td>6,600</td>
<td>18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bambui</td>
<td>6,800</td>
<td>9,800</td>
<td>**28,936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mendankwe</td>
<td>6,808</td>
<td>9,900</td>
<td>&gt;18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nkwen</td>
<td>8,641</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinyin</td>
<td>16,494</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awing</td>
<td>12,726</td>
<td>18,500</td>
<td>*31,170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Derived from Awing Health Census Data (1999)
**Bambui Fon’s Roster. They gave a self-estimate of 15,000 during the interview.

1.5 Historical Background

Sadembouo, and Hasselbring (1991:4) have this to say about the origins of the Ngemba people groups:
“According to the people of the Bamenda Subdivision and Tubah District, they originate from two major areas.
Some claim to come from the north (Tikar, Ndop Plain) while others claim origin from the south (Widikum).” Table
3 summarises the place of origin reported by each group, according to their own oral history.

Table 3: Reported Origins of Ngemba People Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGES</th>
<th>PLACE OF ORIGIN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mankon/Ngemba</td>
<td>Widikum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bafut</td>
<td>Tikari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bambili/Bambui</td>
<td>Tikari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nkwen/Mendankwe</td>
<td>Tikari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinyin</td>
<td>Widikum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awing</td>
<td>Widikum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Sociolinguistics: Rapid Appraisal

The sociolinguistic research approach employed is the “rapid appraisal” method, involving the utilisation of group
and individual interview questionnaires (Bergman 1991, and Stalder 1996). (Individual and group questionnaire
forms can be found in the appendices.) It provides a general idea of the linguistic situation of the speech varieties
being studied. Informant responses reveal the patterns of contact and degree of multilingualism. Researchers rely on
speaker perceptions to determine if intelligibility testing should be carried out.

An understanding of language vitality and viability is valuable for determining the potential success of a
development program. Survival of the language indicates whether or not Scriptures and other books in the mother
tongue will be used. An assessment of attitudes held by the community is also carried out, including local
community leaders, religious leaders, and teachers toward the possibility and value of a language development
project.

¹According to the 1987 Census Publication (Demo 87:5), between 1976–1987 Cameroon experienced a 2.9% annual growth.
Assuming that the same 2.9% rate of growth has continued over the past 12 years and applies equally throughout the country, we
can estimate the 2000 population based on the 1987 figure. There is no way of knowing if there has been significant immigration
or emigration of the speech communities since 1987. Also, these figures do not include populations speaking the language
outside of the village (in cities).
²Greater Mankon includes the following villages and 1987 census figures: Chomba (881), Mankon (12,953), Mbatu (776), Ndzah
(467), Nsongwa (809), Mambu (2,362), Mankanikong (1,774), Akum (3,919), Alatening (1,071), Ndsong (1,464), Mundum 1
(2,153), Mundum 2 (400). The only means of approaching the self-reported estimate is to include half the population of
Bamenda town, which Mankon claims as part of their own. Doing this results in a total population of 111,300.
2.2 \textit{Inherent Intelligibility: Recorded Text Testing (RTT)}

2.2.1 Purpose

Inherent intelligibility tests are conducted to help make decisions on whether two dialects can work on a shared project. We wanted to answer the question of whether the dialects of Bambili and Bambui should be considered to belong to the same language as indicated by previous lexicostatistical analysis.

2.2.2 Description

The procedures for carrying out \textit{intelligibility testing}, which came to be called Recorded Text Testing (RTT), were documented by Eugene Casad (1974). Autobiographical texts of some experience are elicited from the narrator and recorded. Questions for measuring comprehension are obtained in the language of the speakers to be “tested,” then inserted into these short anecdotal stories lasting 2–3 minutes in order to make test tapes of each speech form.

2.2.3 Selection of Participants

In each location, we tested at least ten adults. In order to obtain an accurate cross-section of the entire village population, we always attempted to find five men and five women, both older (age 35 and above) and younger (below age 20), to participate in the testing. Each participant has to have been born in that village and raised by parents who were also from that village. In both Bambili and Bambui the test location was at the fon’s palace, and informants came from that quarter.

2.2.4 Screening of Participants

Potential participants who claimed to have had no or limited contact outside of the village were included in the recorded text survey. Those who were qualified were asked to listen to the recording of their mother tongue. It would be an opportunity for them to become acquainted with the process of listening to a story while wearing headphones and answering questions. Those who did not get at least half of the questions correct were dismissed from taking comprehension tests of other languages.

2.2.5 Interpretation of RTT Results

Individual scores represented as a group performance percentage, called the \textit{mean}, and the average individual variance from that group mean, called the \textit{standard deviation}, are the two primary considerations for interpreting RTT results.

The \textit{percentage} is based on the average/mean after totaling the individual scores, then dividing by the number of individuals tested. The sum of these individual scores, when divided by ten (the number of participants) converts into the percentage of the group’s comprehension of the text. This percentage is indicative of a group’s overall or general understanding of the language of the recorded text. Such a percentage is useful for interpreting the potential for using a common literature. In a discussion on interpreting intelligibility scores, Joseph Grimes states:

At threshold levels high enough to guarantee good communication from the central dialect to its periphery (usually 85% or above), it is reasonable to speak of the dialect cluster as a single LANGUAGE from the linguistic point of view. Speech varieties that come together at only 70% or below are too distinct to qualify as the same language. In between, 70% to 85%, is an area of MARGINAL intelligibility where some communication is satisfactory and some is not. The threshold depends on the risk associated with not communicating well; the final criteria are not purely linguistic. (J. Grimes 1995:22)

Another indicator of group understanding of a text is the variation of individual scores in relation to that overall group average/mean. The distribution of the individual scores for a given group of tests is known as \textit{standard deviation}. If the standard deviation of RTT scores for one community is greater than fifteen percent, this probably indicates bilingualism (Grimes 1987:50). Put another way, such a widespread distribution of scores is likely attributed to the variation from one individual to another in one’s exposure and opportunity to learn the language, a phenomenon called \textit{acquired intelligibility}. When one speech variety is highly similar to another, comprehension scores are usually more consistent from one individual to another, and the standard deviation is therefore lower, indicating \textit{inherent intelligibility}. 

A high percentage of comprehension and a low standard deviation (below fifteen percent) are indicative of potential inclusion in a single language development project if group attitudes are also positive. When the percentage of comprehension falls within the critical range, then standard deviation and sociological factors become important considerations for determining a language’s potential for being grouped with the language of the RTT.

3 RESEARCH RESULTS

3.1 Mankon [Ethnologue: dialect of the Ngemba language]
This rapid appraisal interview was conducted at the palace of the Fon of Mankon. The group of interviewees consisted of ten people: the fon, eight other men, and one woman. The majority of the men were schoolteachers.

3.1.1 Dialect Situation

3.1.1.1 Locality
Most speakers of Mankon live within the area, in Mankon village, located to the west of Bamenda. This single village is comprised of sixty-three quarters, including both rural areas and urban Bamenda. The village proper where the fon’s palace is located is easily accessible from Bamenda, with paved road most of the way.

3.1.1.2 Names of People and Speech Variety, History and Origins
Speakers identify their language as Mankon (mankon) and themselves as the Mankon people. As for their origins, the people say they came from a place called “Sa’ñum” in the east, a name which means ‘from where the sun rises’. From there they migrated through Widikum and Fontem. Some speakers of the language opted not to migrate with the group, instead remaining behind on the Ndop plain.

Mankon people believe they were one people in the past with most of the groups identified by Grimes as being dialects of the same language (2000:48, or see table 1). Except for Mombu, all were members of a Mankon Confederation that disbanded in 1926. Njong was the last group to leave the confederation. The groups split apart because each wanted to have its own chiefdom. The former confederation members still return to Mankon for death ceremonies and marriages. Today they speak slightly differently because of their contact with other groups.

3.1.1.3 Linguistic Affiliation
The ALCAM (1983:78) classifies Mankon under the Ngemba group of languages. Mankon is the name given to a language consisting of six dialects: Mangkunga, Shomba, Songwa, Mbutu, Njong, and Bagangu (see table 1).

The Ethnologue (Grimes, 2000:48) lists Mankon as one of the following 11 dialects of Ngemba (MEGIMBA, MOGIMBA, NGOMBA, NGUEMBA): BAGANGU (AKUM), NJONG (BANJONG), MBUTU (BAMBUTU, ALAMATU, MBOTU), SONGWA (NSONGWA, BANGWA, NGWA), MANKON (BIDA), MOMBU, SHOMBA (BAMECHOM, ALMATSON), MANGKUNGE (NGEMBA, BANDENG, BANDE, BANDE’, NKUNE, MUKOHN), MBEREREWI (MUNDUM 1, BAMUNDUM 1), ANYANG (MUNDUM 2, BAMUNDUM 2), ALATENING (ALATINING).

3.1.1.4 Variation Within Mankon
Most of the dialects mentioned by Grimes (2000) are easily understood by Mankon children, just as early as they begin to understand their own dialect. These dialects include Shomba, Songwa, Mbutu, Njong, Akum, Alatening, and Mundum. (The interviewers did not inquire about the Mangkunge dialect.) Only those who live in the outlying areas of Mankon village, such as Chomba (Shomba), speak slightly differently. The difference is not significant enough to impede intercomprehension. Grimes (2000) lists Mombu as a dialect; however, this should be removed from the listing because Mankon speakers have never heard of it.

3.1.2 Multilingualism
Older Mankon children (age 10) can understand Awing, and adults (age 20) understand Beba, Pinyin, Bambili/Bambui, and Nkwen/Mendankwe. They said there is some difficulty understanding Pinyin. Interviewees claimed to use their own mother tongue with all Ngemba people groups.

When speaking with non-Ngemba people, Mankon speakers use standard English (to be referred to as English) and Cameroonian Pidgin English (hereafter referred to as Pidgin). They admit to using Pidgin every day in their village,
and it is the young people who speak Pidgin the best. Very few people speak any French. They do not speak or understand any other Cameroonian language outside of the Ngemba family.

### 3.1.3 Language Vitality and Viability

#### 3.1.3.1 Migration and Intermarriage

Schooling is responsible for most migration into and out of Mankon. There are some non-Mankon children attending Mankon schools, although not many. Of those who leave the language area to continue their schooling, some stay away to look for employment elsewhere, while others return to the village.

There are many foreigners among the Mankon people. Some have intermarried; others followed relatives who had come for various reasons. In most cases these people come from the surrounding areas. People freely intermarry with various groups, both far and near. There are no restrictions. Most often they marry someone from within Mankon village.

#### 3.1.3.2 Language Use

**In the general community**

Mankon usage is strong in the home, in the fields, among friends, and at local markets. Both Mankon and Pidgin are used at the dispensary. Pidgin is essential for communication at the Mankon Main Market in the urban area of Bamenda and is needed sometimes with non-Mankon friends. Announcements are in the mother tongue. Regional administrative meetings are held in Pidgin and English.

**In the schools**

Classes are taught in English. The use of Pidgin is forbidden during class. The Mankon language is taught as a school subject in junior classes. This explains why students are encouraged to use the mother tongue during school recess rather than Pidgin.

**In religious assemblies**

Two denominations use Mankon for prayers and songs; one uses it also for announcements. Pidgin and English use is also very strong in all church domains. Two denominations read Scripture in English; in the one church an interpretation into Mankon follows the reading. Sermons are given in English with interpretations into either Pidgin or the mother tongue, depending on whether or not there are outsiders present. Church leaders greatly encourage the use of Mankon for the services and other meetings. Many in Mankon village profess to be Christians, but traditional religion has the largest following. Traditional religious ceremonies are in Mankon only.

#### 3.1.3.3 Language Maintenance and Shift

Language maintenance appears strong. Reportedly, even the youth use Mankon more than any other language, including English. It is only at school that students speak English more than Mankon. In the early years of school the students do tend to mix some English and Pidgin with the mother tongue, but children do not speak Pidgin to their parents.

#### 3.1.3.4 Standardization Efforts

To date, there is a small collection of Mankon literature: a song booklet (using the English alphabet), an alphabet chart, diaries, prayer books, but no other books. There are however, some linguistic publications about Mankon listed among the additional resources. Mankon has a language committee in which all church denominations are represented. Dr. Joseph Mfonyam is currently working with the language committee to devise an orthography. Course records at SIL Cameroon from 1980 to 1998 show that some Mankon speakers have attended Discover Your Language workshops. The participants in 1994 were Henri Chi Aya and Awa Fidelis Balick.

#### 3.1.4 Language Attitudes

The people of Mankon are interested in reading and writing only three languages: their own, English, and French. They have no interest in becoming literate in any other African language or dialect. The group responded without hesitation that Mankon young people are proud of their language.
Mankon speakers are extremely favorable toward the idea that they and their children learn to read and write their language. These community leaders have apparently given the matter considerable thought because they provided a list of deliberated rationale for promoting Mankon literacy:

- Written self-expression would be better because one could use Mankon idioms and other words that have no direct English translation.
- Public addresses, which must be typed out, could be given in Mankon.
- Mankon culture and traditions would be preserved.
- A Mankon newspaper would foster a better understanding of the political world.

Schoolteachers are strongly in favor of teaching children at all levels to read and write in their own language. They would like to see Mankon used as a language of instruction and would like to be involved in teaching the language as a subject. The seven teachers interviewed all said that they would like to train trainers if there were a Mankon literacy program. They would also develop literacy materials such as folklore.

3.1.5 Summary

The Mankon language is vital and seems to take precedence in many domains of language use. Although the use of Pidgin and/or English is increasing among the younger generation, they still use the mother tongue more than any other language. Attitudes toward the mother tongue and literacy in it are very positive. For Mankon people, their own speech variety is the only acceptable choice for a written standard.

3.1.5.1 Conclusions

Mankon would probably serve well as a written standard for all of the speech communities believed to be dialects of the same language: Mbrerewi (Mundum 1), Anyang (Mundum 2), Bagangu (Akum), Njong, Mbutu, Songwa, Shomba, Mangkunge, and Alatening. Regarding the possibility of other people groups benefiting in some way from the development of Mankon, see section 4.2, “Recommendations for Further Survey,” at the conclusion of this report.

3.1.5.2 Recommendations

Mankon does have a need for language development; it remains the primary language of the Mankon people. However, the people themselves have many resources already at their disposal for the accomplishment of the translation task and should be encouraged to take advantage of these. It would seem wise to promote Mankon literacy among these other groups and see how widely it is accepted before developing other Ngemba varieties. Mankon RTTs should be administered where there is any doubt of intercomprehension (see section 4.2 for details).

3.2 Bambili dialect of Bambili-Bambui language

The RA questionnaire was completed with responses from the group consisting of the fon and over thirty men age 40 and older, including notables, schoolteachers, church leaders, and other officials.

3.2.1 Bambili Dialect Situation

3.2.1.1 Locality

Bambili is a village located north of Bamenda, along the Ring Road, in the Tubah Subdivision, Mezam Division, of the North West Province, Cameroon. The informants consider Bambili one village composed of thirty-eight quarters, each of which has a quarter head. Most of these quarters have their own subchief (exact number unspecified), which might suggest that they could be distinct villages.

3.2.1.2 Names and Origins of the People

The people call themselves Mbili (mbili), and their language agimbili (‘language of Mbili’). The first German explorers added the prefix ba, meaning ‘people of’, to the name of each language group they encountered. Thus, their original name was transformed eventually into the name Bambili (ba-Mbili). Compare this to the following excerpt from the Bambili Diary 2000 (Pius Anuafor, editor):

> Originally, the people called themselves by the name Mbeligi (‘people of Aligi’) and the geographical entity ‘Ala-ambeligi’ or simply ‘Aligi.’ Mbeligi means ‘I will take a rest’. The German explorer, Zintgraff, during his grassland exploration in 1889, wrote down ‘Bambili’ when his Bali guide said: “ba Mbeligi”
The Mbili say that they share a common origin with the Bafut and Bambui, but are no longer one people with them.

3.2.1.3 Linguistic Affiliation

_ALCAM_ (1983:78) classifies Bambili as a language with two dialects: Mbili and Mbuie. The language is known as Bambili by administrative bodies, as _Mbole_ by their neighbors, and as _Mbogoe_ by the Mankufo. The speakers themselves group their speech variety with the Ngemba languages.

Grimes (2000:31) lists the Bambili as _BAMBILI (BAMBUI)_ with two dialects: _BAMBILI (MBILI, MBELE, MBOGOE)_ and _BAMBUI (MBUI)_ . Bambui will be handled separately in this report (section 3.3).

3.2.1.4 Variation within Bambili

Bambili is homogeneous. There is no dialect variation within thirty-eight quarters of Bambili village. On the other hand, it was mentioned that quarters near the main road would be more apt to mix English with Bambili. Furthermore, speakers say that one is more likely to find Bambili spoken best around the palace.

3.2.2 Multilingualism

3.2.2.1 Related Languages

Bambili is related to the other Ngemba languages. Of these, Bambui and Mankon are easily understood, followed by Mendankwe, Nkwen, other Mankon dialects, and Bafut (with whom they must speak more slowly). Between Bambili and these languages each speaker can use his mother tongue. Young children have more difficulty with other Ngemba languages, thus indicating the need for contact, hence learned bilingualism.

Reportedly, young children can understand Bambui if spoken slowly, but not Bafut. Usually, one must be at least 15 years old even to understand Bafut. Yet, people say that a child exposed to Bafut for 6–12 months would have no difficulty understanding it. Under normal circumstances, such as market contact and school attendance in the Bafut area, achieving speaking proficiency would take 3–4 years. With Pinyin and A wing, however, Bambili speakers will often use Pidgin to make sure comprehension is clear, unless the speakers know each other well.

To answer the question of how much intercomprehension exists between Bambili and Bambui, this survey included intelligibility testing between them, using the recorded text testing (RTT) method.

The Bambui text that was used for this test was proven to be a relatively good testing tool; Bambui speakers themselves produced an average score of 92.7 (standard deviation of 7.3%) on this text.

Bambili test-takers produced an average test score of 79% correct responses on the Bambui story. In contrast, the standard deviation of 18.4, attributable to significant individual variation, eliminates the probability of inherent intelligibility. It should be noted that testing circumstances were less than ideal at the first of two locations where this test was administered. (Many variables may have affected performance, and participants had difficulty understanding the test-taking procedure. These same Bambili test-takers scored only 84% on their Hometown Test, which was surprisingly low). Concrete evidence for acquired intelligibility appears in the test scores of one 11 year-old girl (at the second of two testing locations) who scored high (95%) on her own hometown text but quite low (35%) on the Bambui text. If the figures for mean and standard deviation are correct, Bambui and Bambili cannot be considered dialects of the same language. The spread of scores shows that intelligibility is not inherent but acquired. Comprehension between the two groups is, therefore, due to contact. For complete RTT results, see appendices 7 and 8.

3.2.2.2 Languages of Wider Communication

Pidgin is used nearly every day. It is spoken most by young students struggling to learn English for the first time, but adult women speak it best. Children use it along the road and at school, despite restrictions to the contrary. Men of all ages speak English the best, often because they have had more education.
3.2.2.3 Other Languages
Bambili speakers do not understand people from Saamba Leeko, whom they call Mabako. They must use Pidgin or English to communicate with them. When asked about Babanki, they laughed at the question and replied that they do not understand them at all. They said that this group arrived in the region one hundred years before. Some older people who studied Mungaka in school or heard it at church, on the other hand, understand it.

3.2.3 Language Vitality and Viability
3.2.3.1 Migration and Intermarriage
There are no restrictions governing marriage with people from other language groups. Yet, there was a lot of discussion on this topic before anyone formulated a response. Much of their contact with the other Ngemba groups comes through intermarriage, particularly with the Bafut. No one even mentioned their nearest neighbors, the Bambui. There has been a history of land disputes on the Ring Road between Bambili and Bambui, which may explain the absence of cooperation between the two communities.

Many children from Bambui attend the government secondary school located in Bambili since none exists in Bambui. In addition, Bambili town has six technical and professional schools and colleges that attract many outsiders to the area. As many as ninety percent of the students at the teachers’ school are from elsewhere, while the college of agriculture also has many non-Cameroonian.

In addition, civil servants augment the number of outsiders present in Bambili. Still others come to live and work simply because they like the area. Initially, newcomers speak English and Pidgin but often try to learn Bambili. On the other hand, the location of Bambili along the Ring Road and the presence of schools of higher learning increases their accessibility to other, exerting pressure on them to use Pidgin and English. The question remains: Is the MT really vital?

3.2.3.2 Language Use
Among the three most commonly used languages, Bambili, Pidgin, and English, each functions within virtually mutually exclusive domains, according to informant responses. The appearance of Pidgin and English at home and with friends is minimal and does not represent a threat to the maintenance of Bambili. This diglossic situation fits Fishman’s definition for “stabilized bilingualism” in that each language or dialect is used in a particular set of circumstances serving specific purposes with no threat of replacement (1991:85, 357). The speakers of the minority language self-regulate their language use governed by personal and societal criteria.

Fishman identifies seven stages for reversing language shift, the most crucial of which is stage 6: “mother tongue transmission” from one generation to the next in the “home-family-neighborhood” context (1991:395, 406). Mbili fulfills this and several other requirements, thus meeting the criteria for a language which actually has the potential for transcending the diglossic situation.

In the general community
Locally, Bambili dominates as the language of choice. In the home, with age-mates, and in the fields people speak Bambili. Some occasionally use Pidgin at home and English with friends. At the markets and the integrated health center (Nduomilele), one finds many people from other villages and language groups. One man believes that it is more cordial to speak to friends at the market in Pidgin. As a result, people rely heavily upon Pidgin in these locations.

In the schools
Nearly all (ninety percent) eligible children attend primary school. In Bambili there are seven primary schools and one high school. An estimated seventy-five percent of the young people go on to secondary school. More than half the students at Cameroon College of Arts, Sciences, and Technology are Bambili. The rest come from Bafut and Bambui.
At recess, Bambili-speaking students use the mother tongue among themselves; Pidgin is spoken between children from different languages. English is the language of education/instruction, although most teachers say that they feel free to use Bambili when necessary to explain something that was unclear in English, since the majority of students are Bambili.

**In the churches**
Local pastors say that they use Bambili throughout their services. One church uses Bambili for prayers and songs; Pidgin for prayers and sermons; and English, Latin, and Mungaka for songs as well. In another church Bambili is used in prayers, sermons, and songs; English is used for prayers and songs; Pidgin is used for sermons; and Mungaka is used for prayers and songs. The pastor of one church is not an Bambili man. For this reason he does not use Bambili, but no church members were present to tell us what languages are used in their services. We assume that either English or Pidgin is used, possibly along with other languages. Some people own their own English Bible or a Pidgin New Testament. There are some church members who do not adequately understand these two languages.

**In the public domain**
Bambili predominates as the default language in all public events, announcements, and traditional ceremonies, unless there is a significant number of people present who are speakers of other languages. Regional council meetings are conducted in English and Pidgin.

3.2.3.3 **Attitudes Toward the Mother Tongue**
Bambili is favored as the first language for literacy. In the church, Bambili is welcomed because it makes the message accessible to congregants who cannot understand Pidgin. Both leaders and members alike share this attitude.

Adults stated that young people embrace their language as something good. They declared that no other language is spoken more than Bambili by the youth. Everyone admitted that language mixing occurs in the form of borrowing, but this phenomenon is viewed as an extremely negative tendency. Nevertheless, borrowing is unavoidable since many words do not translate well. In contrast, parents would prefer that their children speak either good English or good Bambili.

Teachers are enthusiastically prepared to teach Bambili in the classroom. One teacher stressed repeatedly the regulation forbidding Bambili to be spoken in any domain at school. He faithfully adheres to this rule. In contrast, many teachers indicated their practice of ignoring this rule in using Bambili for explanation when the need arises. John Foleng, although not a teacher, would be willing to teach literacy.

Here are some of the benefits mentioned by the fon’s council for Bambili literacy:
- better self-expression in Bambili,
- preservation of the language for the next generation and ensuring language purity,
- ability to write and give public addresses,
- secrecy—maintaining confidentiality from speakers of other languages,
- recording of their history and culture, and
- ability to read letters written in the original language without the need to translate.

3.2.3.4 **Language Maintenance and Shift**
Bambili has a strong influence and some claims to fame which might ensure its survival. Bambili is a crossroads for many areas north and south of them. John Foleng claims that the first Cameroonian high school was in Bambili. There are a number of learning institutions in Bambili that draw outsiders (see footnote 3). Yet, at the same time the diglossic situation is stable. Bambili perpetuates as the dominant language at the community level. The strong place of Bambili as the language of home, family, friends, local work places, and local government satisfies Fishman’s factors for language maintenance (refer to the section on Language Use).

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5Churches: Catholic—*St. Francis of Assissi Mission* (Ntsewhi), *St. Peter Chanel* (Ntehmbang), *St. Ignatius of Loyola* (Ntemnibie), *St. Augustine’s* (Ntahmuokong), *Our Lady of Fatima parish* (Bambili); *Presbyterian Church in Cameroon* (Ntoh, Ntehmbang, Atontigi, Ntembibie); *Cameroon Baptist Convention* (Mommbie).
3.2.3.5 Standardization Efforts
The Bambili language committee has already begun work on translation and literacy through the church. Reverend Father Peter Foleng began the translation and continued until he was assigned to the Kumbo diocese. He had taken a translation course and set up a committee to encourage Scripture translation. Before each Sunday mass, lectors translate the three Scripture readings. This has been done for over seven years now. It is hoped that eventually the entire Bible will be completed in this way.

Some works in print include the following: Funwi F. Ayuninjam (1998) of Georgetown University has recently published a reference grammar for Bambili (available in the SIL library in Yaoundé), and has organized some translation work. A dissertation on Bambili Lyric Poetry can be found in the library at the University of Yaoundé. Pius Anuafor publishes an annual Bambili Diary.

3.2.4 Attitudes Toward Other Languages
English and French are second and third choices for literacy, owing to their status as international and national languages. These languages have the capacity to provide an individual with greater mobility in the world. Bambili people, in the opinion of the fon’s notables, have absolutely no need for or interest in becoming literate in the surrounding languages. For them, oral proficiency in these languages is adequate.

Some church languages have been employed in the past, although they are falling into disuse at this time. A few men expressed an interest in learning to read and write both Latin, which was the first language learned and recited in the Catholic church, and Mungaka, which was formerly used for preaching in the Presbyterian church. These do not appear, however, to be popular sentiments.

Community attitudes toward Pidgin are positive and the Bambui seminary has a long reputation for encouraging the use of other languages. With the appearance of the Pidgin Bible in 2001, we are wondering how it will be received. We need to ask what kind of impact this will have on future translation needs.

3.2.5 Summary
Bambili is a viable language, continuing to enjoy a wide usage. On the other hand, many members of the community are educated and speak English well. Pidgin, too, is quite commonly understood. RTT testing of Bambui yielded an average score of seventy-nine percent (standard deviation of 18.4), indicating that Bambili people’s comprehension of Bambui is probably attributable to acquired intelligibility. Bambili town, with its markets, schools, and proximity to a major city, is a crossroads for a large region, attracting many outsiders with whom Pidgin or English must be used. The majority of people could continue to use books in these two languages (most elderly women excluded). They also recognize that there are still some things which can be expressed only in Bambili, implying a certain level of need.

3.2.5.1 Conclusions
The Bambili people have a rather small population (6,600), if census figures are accurate. This consideration would make it a low priority for language development. It was observed that they have frequent contact with their close neighbors, the Bambui, through schools, markets, and churches. However, neither group admitted to having much interaction with the other, possibly due to the past land disputes. Intercomprehension, although not high enough to be considered more than marginal, might still be high enough for these two groups to work together toward a standard they could share in common.

Bambili and Bambui are lexically close (cognicity is seventy-nine percent according to Seguin 1989:6) and could be considered dialects of the same language. Both groups live in close proximity in the same geographical and administrative area, have frequent contact with each other on all levels, and have a relatively high intercomprehension. The fact that neither group made any reference to the other would suggest that there may be some strong differences that must be overcome in order to coordinate mutual efforts for language development.

As social dynamics tend to be the deciding factors in a joint language program, it may turn out that the Bambili and Bambui are unwilling to collaborate with each other. In light of the amount of language work already done in Bambili, it may be difficult to convince them to abandon their own personal translation. The Catholic church has
been translating Bambili Scripture for seven years now. Additionally, there exists in print a Bambili diary, a thesis on Bambili poetry, and a reference grammar.

3.2.5.2 Recommendations
Comprehension of Mankon could be checked using the recorded text testing (RTT). We suggest that the Bambili Hometown tape and Bambui tape be retested with at least six well-chosen Bambili participants. If Bambili is developed, every effort should be made to collaborate with Bambui.

3.3 Bambui dialect of Bambili-Bambui language
The fon of Bambui, members of his council, some notables, schoolteachers, and church leaders provided the information for the following report during a group interview questionnaire. There were a minimum of fourteen men and five women present.

3.3.1 Dialect Situation
3.3.1.1 Locality
Bambui is a village north of Bamenda, along the Ring Road, Tubah Subdivision, Mezam Division, of the North West Province, Cameroon. It is composed of twenty-four quarters, every one of which has a quarter head, while some even have subchiefs.

3.3.1.2 Names and Origins
The people who live in Bambui call themselves mbui, and their language awombui (‘language of Mbui’). As with most of the languages in this part of Cameroon, the Bali prefix for “people of” was added to their name and remains to this day as the officially recognized name of the people, the language, and the village.

Ancestors of the Bambui people migrated from the Tikari region in the east. They share a common origin with the Bafut and Bambili peoples. Nevertheless, they pride themselves as a people distinct from these other groups.

3.3.1.3 Linguistic Affiliation
The ALCAM (1983:78) shows Bambui as a dialect of Bambili, along with the dialect Bambili. Administrative bodies call the dialect by the name Bambui. The speakers classify themselves with the Ngemba languages.

Grimes (2000:31) classifies it in the same manner as follows: BAMBILI (BAMBUI) with two dialects: BAMBILI (MBILI, MBELE, MBOGOE) and BAMBUI (MBUI).

3.3.1.4 Variation Within the Dialect
According to the fon and his notables, all but two of the quarters speak exactly the same. These are Finge, whose subchief hails from Kom, and Bafukum, whose subchief originates from Santa-mbe. People say that the best Bambui is spoken in the central area around the fon’s palace, where reportedly more children tend to speak Bambui.

3.3.2 Multilingualism
3.3.2.1 Related Languages
Bambui is included with the other Ngemba languages, based on lexicostatistics and confirmed by the speakers themselves. The group interviewed reported the following languages as similar to their own: Bafut, Bambili, Nkwen, Mendankwe, Nsongwa, Akum, Chomba (Shomba), and Mbatu. Adults say that when speakers of these languages are encountered, each can use his mother tongue. One must be a minimum of 12 years of age, however, to understand them (this points to acquired intelligibility).

Responses from the group included conflicting opinions on multilingualism. Their answers were varied and unclear. In one instance they said that when conversing with speakers of neighbouring languages other than Bambili and Nkwen, one must talk slowly; but, on the other hand, they must even enunciate well for Bambili speakers. Later, they said that they understand Bafut, Bambili, Mendankwe, and Nkwen, all to the same degree. They then included Mankon in the same relationship as Mendankwe and Nkwen. Varying responses may reflect the fact that different individuals have not learned the same languages to the same degree.
Pinyin and Awing, they affirmed, are only partially understood by Bambui people, each with the same level of difficulty. Only some words are pronounced the same as Bambui. Therefore, they often make use of Pidgin. Bamukumbit is said to be similar to Bambui as well, but nothing was said on whether they understand it.

To answer the question of how much intercomprehension exists between Bambili and Bambui, this survey included intelligibility testing between them using the recorded text testing (RTT) method. There is some question as to how accurate the Bambili text used for this survey is in measuring intercomprehension because the hometown panel (Bambili speakers) scored only eighty-four percent (standard deviation of 10.3%) on this text, where one would expect to see scores in the range of 90–100%. Since the quality of the Bambili text is suspect, it suggests that the actual differences may be less dramatic than the results described in the next paragraph.

The results of the Bambili text yielded a mean of 59.6%, and a standard deviation of twenty-five percent. These same test-takers produced a mean score of ninety-three percent on their own Bambui text, demonstrating that they understood well the test-taking procedure. The three young people under age 20 who took the Bambili test had an average score of forty-seven percent, which is significantly lower than that of the adults (sixty-four percent). These figures, if valid, eliminate any possibility of inherent intelligibility. Comprehension of Bambili is, therefore, most likely due to contact (that is, learned intelligibility). For complete RTT results, see appendix 8.

### 3.3.2.2 Languages of Wider Communication

Pidgin is spoken every day in the village, and best by the youth. It is used with people who speak languages from other regions and with those distant Ngemba languages such as Pinyin and Awing. In the church, Pidgin is important in reaching youth and francophones, and makes the message clearer for them. English is also widely spoken.

### 3.3.3 Language Vitality and Viability

#### 3.3.3.1 Migration and Intermarriage

Most people traveling through the North West must pass through Bambui. Many outsiders move here, drawn by the hospitality of the local people, the fertile land, and the abundance of food. Bambui residents mostly marry within their own group. No preference is shown for any single language group. They marry freely with people from all over. Yet, they are noticeably silent about their nearest neighbours of the Bambili dialect. This may be attributable to land disputes between the two groups in the past.

Bambui students number more than half of all students attending the primary schools in Bambui and comprise about half of the enrollment at the secondary school in Bambili. There are also many Kom children at the secondary school. Local students who continue with their education often find jobs elsewhere, but some return to the village because they cannot find jobs elsewhere.

Bambui is known for its standards of academic excellence. Its advanced schools attract students from the Manyu division in the South West and Europeans who attend the seminary. Other foreigners come from all over Cameroon. Reportedly, in time, they all speak Bambui. There must be a lot of contact with outsiders for the residents of Bambui due to its location along the Ring Road and the existence of many advanced educational institutions, thus encouraging the people to gain a higher fluency in both Pidgin and English. This leaves the issue of language vitality in question.

#### 3.3.3.2 Language Use

All three languages—Bambui, Pidgin, and English—are used in many domains of life in Bambui. In most traditional situations Bambui is used. The Bambui language community is a member of the Northwest National Language Broadcasters (NWENALAB) and airs local announcements over the radio in Bambui.

### In the general community

In every home Bambui is spoken, but some parents speak to their children in Pidgin as well, while in some households (in seventy-five percent of the quarters) English is even spoken. Age-mates, depending on the environment, may use any of the three, but mostly Bambui. At the markets Bambui people speak their mother tongue, but they also speak Pidgin to accommodate the many visitors drawn from elsewhere because the markets are centrally located. Similarly, at the subdivisional hospital and two community health posts, Pidgin is normally spoken, because medical staff and patients come from all over the North West province.
In the schools
Bambui has eight primary schools, but no secondary school. Most (ninety percent) of the children attend primary school, while more than half (sixty percent) are in secondary school in Bambili.

At the secondary school in Bambili, the mother tongue is forbidden for all students. English is the only language students and teachers are allowed to speak. However, students speak Bambui during recess and in class. Most teachers even use Bambui from time to time for instruction and explanation. For a time during the 1970s Bambui was taught as a subject at the local seminary but has since been dropped. French is taught as a subject at some schools.

In the churches
Christians are in the majority. In one church prayers, songs, and announcements are in Bambui. Sermons are translated from Pidgin into Bambui and English. When the European leaders preach, they speak English, which is interpreted into Bambui. Many Scripture portions and doctrinal teachings have been translated into Bambui. Doctrine classes and youth group meetings are in Pidgin rather than English, so as not to alienate anyone who is uneducated. At the first meeting on Sundays, the sermon is interpreted from Pidgin to Bambui, but at the second meeting everything is read in Pidgin. The leader gives members the opportunity to stand and pray in Bambui during the meeting as a way of finding out if the sermon was understood. Leaders occasionally learn some Bambui, much to the excitement of the congregation. Members complain when a leader who uses even one word of Bambui is transferred out of their area. A public outcry ensues if the Scripture is not translated into Bambui during the service.

Another church uses Bambui for prayers, songs, and sermons interpreted from Pidgin. There are also prayers and songs in Pidgin. English is used for Bible studies. The Bible is read in English and interpreted into Bambui. Many of the older women of the community understand nothing other than Bambui. Two other churches use only English and Pidgin for prayers, songs, and sermons.

In the public domain
In public announcements English takes precedence, followed by Pidgin, and lastly Bambui in order of usage. Announcements in the market, however, are strictly in Bambui. Traditional religious ceremonies are in Bambui exclusively.

3.3.3.3 Attitudes Toward the Mother Tongue
Despite the greater use of English and Pidgin by youth and adults alike, the young people are happy with Bambui and say they like it. The adults are very enthusiastic about Bambui literacy. Having their language in writing would give them a great sense of pride and would allow them to maintain their language and culture, improve oral communication, and provide a means of secrecy.

Church leaders believe that the Bible should be the central guide for all activities and should be made accessible to everyone in the language they understand the best. Older women can only profit from an Bambui translation. Church leaders and members encourage the use of Bambui in church. An Bambui Bible is absolutely necessary; it is the deep cry of the Bambui people. Members will verbally attack a leader if the Scripture he reads is not translated into Bambui. Some even stand up and shout that there is no democracy.

Teachers believe that Bambui literacy is necessary and would be extremely helpful in school. Grace Ache Mambi, a teacher at G. S. Macha, believes that Bambui literacy should come first. She is, therefore, very willing to teach it. These thoughts are shared by at least two other teachers from her school. Others like Michael Amungwa and Thomas Momaa would be willing to develop an alphabet, teach literacy, and assemble a lexicon. The elderly say that they would help to explain terms and vocabulary. People from different church denominations would be willing to work together on a translation project. Some churches already have joint services and pulpit exchanges.

3.3.3.4 Language Maintenance and Shift
From school age onward English and Pidgin are used more than Bambui. This is a strong indicator of language shift. On the other hand, speakers realize that certain things can only be explained in Bambui. Therefore, People think that the mother tongue will always have a place in Bambui life.
No language mixing occurs, according to the fon and the notables in the group interview. Depending on the situation, adults feel that it is quite normal for their children to speak to them in Pidgin. They will respond in Pidgin, sometimes in a corrective manner.

The local seminary has encouraged the use of other languages for the past twenty years. For this reason they might stimulate interest in the Pidgin Bible being made available this year. We must ask ourselves how much people will favor using this translation of the Scriptures.

3.3.3.5 Standardization Efforts
There are several things written in Bambui, including prayers, a songbook translated from English, a Bambui alphabet, a dictionary booklet on flora and fauna, and a Bambui diary/passbook (Bonu 1998).

Church leaders asserted that the Scriptures in Pidgin\(^6\) would be more beneficial than a Bafut Bible, because Bambui and Bafut are too different. Understanding of Bafut is so limited that it would still have to be interpreted for the listeners. Bambui residents, aware that the Bafut New Testament has been translated, are enthusiastic about the prospects for adaptation. Some churches even contributed money toward the Bafut translation project.

The seminary formed a club to translate the Scriptures into Bambui. In one church women are encouraged to be involved in the translation of the weekly readings.

3.3.4 Attitudes Toward Other Languages
The group expressed a desire for literacy in all the neighboring languages. Naturally, Bambui would be the first choice, but for the sake of learning and improving communication, and the ability to hear confidential information in other languages, they would like to improve their proficiency in surrounding languages, such as Bambili, Bafut, Mankon, and Nkwen. In their opinion Awing is too geographically removed to be of any service to them.

3.3.5 Summary
Bambui is still a very viable language, used even for national language radio broadcasts. It is used in nearly every domain of life. The people are proud of their language and realize that some things can only be expressed adequately in Bambui. Every age group has a positive attitude toward Bambui, and there is a strong desire for mother tongue literacy even though the reported language use patterns of young people indicate that language shift is exerting some influence. Reportedly, the older women have trouble understanding anything but Bambui.

Bambui speakers do not appear to have sufficient comprehension of Bambili to use that speech variety as a written standard. Recorded text testing showed that Bambui people understood only sixty percent of the Bambili text and that there was great variation between individual scores (standard deviation of twenty-five percent), indicating acquired rather than inherent intelligibility. It is possible that their actual comprehension is much greater, but evidence from young people’s scores suggests that the Bambili test is adequate despite its shortcomings.

English is widely spoken and understood, and there is no shortage of well-educated individuals in the community who either live there or return for visits. A great number of outsiders have moved in. Thus, there is much exposure to the use of English and Pidgin. In the immediate vicinity of Bambui are many schools beyond secondary and high school. This is, therefore, a highly literate population.

Some development work has already been done in Bambui, and Scripture translation continues weekly in one church. Many members of society are ready and willing to begin a program for standardization.

3.3.5.1 Conclusions
The Bambui community should have little difficulty finding the talent and the resources to have their own language committee and language project, with only moderate assistance and guidance from others to initiate and persevere with a development program. They gave a very well articulated rationale for MT literacy development. Bambui meets the minimum language priority criteria (Trihus 2000) for involvement of SIL Cameroon on the basis of its significant population and level of need.

\(^6\)There is already a Pidgin New Testament available; the Pidgin Bible is due to come out some time in 2001.
3.3.5.2 Recommendations
It is unlikely that Bambui speakers would benefit from the Bafut New Testament other than as an adaptation. This should be verified with a recorded text test in Bafut. We suggest additional RTT comprehension testing with Mankon, Nkwen, and Mendankwe. Work could possibly be coordinated with one or more of these other groups for joint efforts or adaptations, especially with Bambili. Every effort should be made to collaborate with Bambili.

3.4 Mendankwe dialect of Menkdankwe-Nkwen language
All information reported here derives from the group questionnaire interviews of the fon and his council, notables, schoolteachers, and church leaders. There were eleven men present.

3.4.1 Dialect Situation
3.4.1.1 Locality
The village of Bamendankwe is located south of the Ring Road in the mountainous circle of Mendankwe Nkwe east of Bamenda in Bamenda Central Subdivision, Mezam Division, North West Province, Cameroon. It is comprised of twenty-eight quarters, covering both rural and urban sectors on the eastern side of Bamenda.

3.4.1.2 Names of People and Speech Variety
The people call themselves Mendankwe (Menda) and their speech Ab onionamenda, or ‘language of Mendankwe’. They and their village are normally referred to as Bamendankwe. Ba is the prefix for ‘people of’ used by the first Germans explorers in Cameroon. The Bamenda people (or Mendankwe) received the suffix Nkwe, the name of their first leader, in order to distinguish this administrative area of Bamenda Town. Alternate names are Munda and Bamenda. For the purposes of this report, the people and language will be referred to by the name Mendankwe, as they are already known in linguistic publications.

3.4.1.3 History/Origins
The Mendankwe claim to have migrated originally from Northern Nigeria to Tikari. From the Tikari region they moved west to where they are presently located. They share the same origins along with the Nkwen, Bafut, Bambili, and Bambui people. Moreover, they believe themselves to be one people with all the Ngemba language groups even though they believe that the Mankon groups do not share the same origins. They have been living in close proximity over a long period of time and now have one culture and diet in common as a result.

3.4.1.4 Linguistic Affiliation
The ALCAM (1984:78) lists this speech variety as Mandankwe, a dialect of Nkwen, along with the Nkwen dialect. The speakers group themselves with the Ngemba languages.

Grimes (2000:45) classifies it in the following manner: MENDANKWE (MANDANKWE) Dialects: NKWEN (BAFRENG), MENDANKWE (MUNDA, BAMENDA).

3.4.1.5 Variation Within the Dialect
The speakers themselves report no variation within Mendankwe. Despite this claim that there are no dialects, the best place to learn good Mendankwe is in the royal area, at traditional ceremonies in particular.

3.4.2 Multilingualism
3.4.2.1 Related Languages
During the group questionnaire, the Mendankwe people interviewed claimed to use the mother tongue reciprocally with all of the Ngemba speech varieties, without adjustment to their rate of speaking (except for Pinyin and Awing speakers). They stated that a young child can even understand their closest neighbors: Nkwen, Bambui, and Mankon on the first encounter with these speakers. Pinyin and Awing are more difficult for the Mendankwe to understand and must be a at least 25 years of age to comprehend them.

The Mendankwe say, “We speak like the Ngemba languages because of contact over many years.” Their speech varieties, they report, have blended together over years of contact, since the Ngemba groups came from the Mbang.

7Correct spelling as it occurs in ALCAM.
In their own words, “Their talk shifted toward ours as they adjusted when they moved into the Bamenda area.”

3.4.2.2 Languages of Wider Communication
After their mother tongue, the Mendankwe use the following languages of wider communication, Pidgin as the first choice, and English as the second choice. Both of these languages are used every day. Pidgin is best spoken by “the old mothers who have not been to school,” that is, the adult women. In comparison, English is best spoken by those who have been to school, usually adult men and boys, although this is changing some, as more girls have access to education.

3.4.2.3 Other Languages
There are two other languages in the area, unrelated to Mendankwe. These are Saamba-Leeko and Babanki, with whom the Mendankwe speak Pidgin. There is also a small community of Muslims (“Fulani/Hausa”), who speak Mbororo, living in the quarters of Ntenefor and Achichen.

3.4.3 Language Vitality and Viability
3.4.3.1 Migration and Intermarriage
There are no existing marriage restrictions or preferences among the Mendankwe. This indicates the absence of negative attitudes toward surrounding languages and also signifies a lack of influence or pressure for another language to dominate.

Many foreigners, predominantly from the West Province, settle in the urban area of Mendankwe, that is, the eastern section of Bamenda. These people are attracted by the relative tranquility, invitations by the residents, the growth of the city, availability of land, and the generosity and kindness of the people there. In the city quarters, foreigners make up three-fourths of the population. Most of the newcomers initially use Pidgin until they learn Mendankwe.

3.4.3.2 Language Use
Mendankwe is currently in use in every domain of life. However, Pidgin is sometimes used when people want to express themselves better, such as when they lack the right words in Mendankwe or meet someone who does not understand Mendankwe. English is used primarily in the educational system, for record-keeping, for official business, and in administrative capacities.

In the general community
Mendankwe takes priority for language use in all domains except in the big market. Pidgin is used some in the home, with age-mates as needed, in the markets, and at the integrated health center. Only Mendankwe is utilized while working in the fields. English may be used at times by age-mates, at the big market, and at the clinic.

In the schools
English is the official language for school. Yet, there is tolerance of Pidgin in the first couple years of school as the students are learning English. Teachers use Mendankwe in class with the children from this village when they need explanation and sometimes during recess. Children are free to speak Mendankwe at recess, along with English and Pidgin.

In the churches
It was reported that ninety percent of the population is Christian. Only a restricted group practice animism (follow traditional religion), of which the fon is the high priest. All churches use both Mendankwe and English for one purpose or another. One church sometimes uses Pidgin during the sermon. Another church uses some Pidgin in every part of the church service.

Some churches uses Mendankwe for prayers and songs; English for prayers, sermons, and songs; and Pidgin for prayers, songs, and some sermons. In still another church, Mendankwe is used in songs, prayer meetings, and doctrine classes, while English is used for prayers, sermons, and songs. Other churches use Mendankwe for songs only; they use English for prayers, sermons, and songs. They also use some Pidgin for sermons.
Mendankwe is used for announcements, discussion at regional council meetings, and for traditional religious ceremonies, where it is used exclusively. Pidgin is not employed in these areas, while English is utilized only for reading and writing during meetings.

### 3.4.3.3 Attitudes Toward the Mother Tongue
Mendankwe youth are happy with their language according to the interviewees. Despite a positive attitude, some adults are frustrated because they and their children do not know the complete vocabulary of their language, especially those who started attending school at a young age. As a result, there is some mixing of Mendankwe with Pidgin and English, which the people feel is a good thing, because it achieves the aim of smooth communication.

The informants expressed great interest in Mendankwe literacy. The ability to read and write Mendankwe would be helpful for writing documents, keeping records, maintaining the form of the language and culture, and preserving their identity and their history. To them Mendankwe is essential for preserving their culture.

One teacher, for example, asserts that teachers believe that learning to read and write in Mendankwe would benefit students. He would contribute by developing an alphabet, creating primers and books, and teaching adult literacy classes. MT literacy is preferred over literacy in any other language. In fact, teachers would like to see it introduced as a language of instruction, and would love to assist in teaching it.

### 3.4.3.4 Language Maintenance and Shift
Most children go to primary school, while only half attend secondary school. Those who finish or continue with their education usually leave the area to search for employment. We do not know if this means that they leave the village for the urban area of Bamenda or that they leave the area altogether. Very few children come from elsewhere to attend schools in Bamendankwe.

### 3.4.3.5 Standardization Efforts
Mendankwe has a cultural committee but no language committee in place at the moment. The cultural committee records information in English. To date Mendankwe has little written material: songs written by young male catechists serving as choirmasters, and a bilingual English-Mendankwe dictionary by Lucas Taniform Nduma that was unavailable.

### 3.4.4 Attitudes Toward Other Languages
Even though parents and children often communicate in Pidgin, the parents are disappointed when a child who has learned English addresses them in Pidgin. Adults realize the value of English as an international language, and it pleases them to know that their children will be able to communicate and travel in most of the world. Other international languages like French and German are also quite useful, as well as the language Fulfulde, since it has such a large population of speakers in Cameroon.

Pidgin and English are best understood after Mendankwe, Pidgin being first, followed by English. On the issue of literacy, however, English is the first choice, while Mendankwe is of secondary importance. However, those interviewed expressed no interest in learning to read and write the surrounding local languages. Regional speech varieties such as these have a range too limited to be useful. Their desire is to learn to read and write a language that they already know how to speak.

### 3.4.5 Summary
Mendankwe appears to be a strong language, showing little sign of disuse. At the same time, though, the use of English and Pidgin is high. Frequent contact with these two languages is common, since Bamendankwe is semi-urban.

Mendankwe has reached equilibrium with these languages in that each maintains specific domains. However, Mendankwe speakers are content to say that they often mix these languages, striving for the most expedient communication. Again, adult women speak Pidgin well, but have an inadequate knowledge of English.
3.4.5.1 Conclusions
A language project here would be viable, although Pidgin or English may suffice for their needs. There are many educated men articulate in English. Therefore, they could organize and manage a translation program themselves if this is deemed necessary. Mendankwe meets the population criteria set by Cameroon Branch that languages with greater than ten thousand speakers receive priority over smaller groups (Trihus). Based on their proximity to Nkwen geographically and lexically, Mendankwe people could use the standardization of this speech form or an adaptation of it.

3.4.5.2 Recommendations
Mendankwe speakers should be tested (RTTs) on their comprehension of Nkwen and Mankon, as they share a common boundary, history, and linguistic characteristics (apparent cognicity with Nkwen is eighty-five percent and with Mankon is eighty-one percent, see previous research in appendix 3). This should be done before any further decisions are made. The Nkwen RTT is needed to clarify whether Nkwen and Mendankwe should be considered one language or two.

3.5 Nkwen dialect of Mendankwe-Nkwen language
Research data was compiled from the group interview of seven men and two women, including the fon and several notables, teachers, and clergy.

3.5.1 Dialect Situation

3.5.1.1 Locality
Nkwen is located to the north and east of Bamenda, on either side of the Ring Road, Bamenda Central Subdivision, Mezam Division, North West Province, Cameroon. It is one village composed of 36-40 quarters and includes both urban and rural areas.

3.5.1.2 Names and Origins
Nkwen is the name speakers use both to refer to themselves as a people and their language. It is the name officially recognized by government administrators, linguists, and others. The Nkwen people originated from the Tikari region to the east in the Ndop plain. They share the same origins with the Mendankwe and Bafut peoples.

3.5.1.3 Linguistic Affiliation
The ALCAM shows this speech variety as Nkwen, with the alternate name Bafreng. It is listed as a distinct language with two dialects: Nkwen and Mandankwe. The speakers refer to themselves as part of the Ngemba group of languages.

An excerpt from Grimes (2000:45) shows the following: MENDANKWE (MANDANKWE) Dialects: NKWEN (BAFRENG), MENDANKWE (MUNDA, BAMENDA).

3.5.1.4 Variation within the Dialect
Nkwen has no stated dialect variation, although the central area is said to be the best place to learn the standard. Nkwen speakers consider Mendankwe a different language, despite their declaration that the differences are slight. It is the language understood best by Nkwen speakers, but not readily understood by young children unless they live for a year among Mendankwe speakers. Each speaker can use his mother tongue and be understood, if he speaks it slowly.

3.5.2 Multilingualism

3.5.2.1 Related Languages
Nkwen is part of the Ngemba group of languages (see introduction to language cluster). Speakers understand Mendankwe, Mankon, and Bafut if spoken slowly and only after some significant contact time. This requires one year of immersion or several years of casual market contact. They share the same origins with Mendankwe and Bafut, but are not one people. Although Bambili and Bambui are close neighbors, Nkwen speakers assert that they do not even speak to the people in these villages and cannot understand those languages at all. They have almost no contact with Pinyin, Awing, or Mundum, and if they do, will use English or Pidgin.
3.5.2.2 Languages of Wider Communication
Pidgin and English are widely understood by the Nkwen, Pidgin more so than English. Pidgin has become the lingua franca for the majority of the population in most language groups of the North West Province. Pidgin is best spoken by the youth, as they are in the process of learning English at school. English is used almost exclusively in education, particularly at the higher levels. Adult men are the best speakers of English, since women were often denied the same access to education for many years.

3.5.2.3 Other Languages
In the group interview session, the Nkwen speakers made no mention of unrelated languages other than Mbororo. They are referred to as “Fulani” locally, and are the next largest language group represented in the schools. In spite of the large presence, no effort has been made to understand this very different language.

3.5.3 Language Vitality and Viability
3.5.3.1 Migration and Intermarriage
There are no marital restrictions. Members of the group are free to marry anyone from another language group. Only those who live in quarters bordering the Bafut area tend to marry people more often from that group than any other.

Some children from neighboring villages, especially Mankon, go to Nkwen schools. Foreigners settle in Nkwen villages because of the nonaggressive and hospitable nature of the people, jobs, educational opportunities, and land availability. Civil servants and others come from all over Cameroon. Initially, these newcomers speak Pidgin until they learn Nkwen.

3.5.3.2 Language Use
Nkwen continues to find use in many domains of daily life. Pidgin is used in nearly as many situations as Nkwen. On the other hand, English is used primarily in the educational system and other official capacities, and therefore finds itself in a secondary, though prestigious, role.

In the general community
Nkwen is used in the home, with age-mates, and in the fields. Pidgin is spoken in some homes, extensively in the markets, and at the integrated health center (where nurses come from outside the area), despite their proximity to the fon’s palace. With age-mates that are outsiders, Nkwen speakers use either Pidgin or English.

In the schools
Although English is the official language for school, teachers and administrators have been open to the use of Nkwen for instruction and explanation. Nkwen has been taught as a subject for three to five years now in class One and class Two, where it is used fully. We do not know if speaking Nkwen is permissible in other classes, but it is clear that teachers are encouraged to use English as much as possible with students outside of the classroom. During recess students use Nkwen, Pidgin, and English.

More than ninety percent of all children attend primary school. More than half of them continue on to secondary school. The high attrition rate is due mostly to the lack of financial resources. Students who continue their education search for jobs elsewhere instead of returning to the village.

In the churches
The majority (ninety percent) of the Nkwen population is Christian. All church denominations use Nkwen to some extent. However, many of the urban church congregations include non-Nkwen speakers. Thus, English and Pidgin find greater prominence. Churches use Nkwen for prayers, songs, and Gospel readings; they use Pidgin for prayers, sermons, songs, and Gospel readings; and they use English for sermons, songs, and Gospel readings.

In the public domain
Nkwen is used exclusively for announcements and traditional religious ceremonies. Naturally, Pidgin and English prevail when speakers of other languages are present during council meetings.
3.5.3.3 Attitudes Toward the Mother Tongue
Adults reported that the youth like their language and are very proud of it. They admitted that the mixing of Nkwen, Pidgin, and English does occur. The most common type of mixing entails word borrowing from English, but opinions were divided as to whether this is good or bad.

According to the fon’s group, an Nkwen Bible translation is absolutely necessary. It would facilitate understanding for all, especially for the many elderly people in the community who understand neither English nor Pidgin. Church leaders encourage the use of Nkwen during weekly services, youth group gatherings, prayer meetings, and Bible studies.

3.5.3.4 Language Maintenance and Shift
Many students who continue with their education and graduate leave the area and do not return. Nonetheless, Nkwen has a large proportion of educated and influential people who are interested in protecting and passing on their language despite the pressure exerted by English and Pidgin. There is a strong chance that Nkwen will survive since it has been taught as a subject in school for at least three years now. Nkwen speakers continue to use their language as the primary language in all domains, except regional council meetings, markets, and clinics, where strangers abound. Rural churches use Nkwen for all parts of the service, but urban churches do not, in order to accommodate non-Nkwen speakers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAINTENANCE FACTORS</th>
<th>SHIFT FACTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nkwen is the exclusive language for home, farm, announcements, and traditional religious ceremonies</td>
<td>A majority of the most educated members of society leave to never return</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nkwen is the primary language among age-mates</td>
<td>The urban churches in Nkwen do not use the language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nkwen is the primary language in churches</td>
<td>Pidgin is the language of commerce and administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nkwen is taught as a subject in some schools</td>
<td>English is the primary language of education and politics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5.3.5 Standardization Efforts
Nkwen has a language committee not yet registered with NACALCO. Nkwen and Mendankwe are considered to be dialects of the same language according to some native speakers and linguists. As such, finding a single name for the two would be difficult. They have an approved orthography and are in the process of starting a Bible translation, although language development is still in the planning stage. To date several translated works are currently being used in the churches. Two primers and a diary have been produced for teaching Nkwen in the schools, and a dictionary is underway. In addition, a PROPELCA program to utilize Nkwen in teaching was begun four or five years ago, something which teachers are thoroughly enjoying. Regina Tanchia says she “loves teaching Nkwen classes.”

The benefits of developing Nkwen are multifold. It would provide continuity in the language by establishing a standard that would provide individuals with a fuller understanding of their mother tongue. Nkwen people could ensure some measure of confidentiality in written documents and, above all, maintain their language and culture.

Course records at SIL Cameroon from 1980 to 1998 show that some Nkwen natives have attended Discover Your Language workshops. These were Barnabas Tandia, Regina Ngegha Tandia, Stella Ngu Ngwingwa, Elizabeth Ncheafor Awambeng, and Elizabeth Wong.

3.5.4 Attitudes Toward Other Languages
Nkwen speakers have little or no interest in learning to read and write in the languages of their neighbors, such as Bafut and Mankon. Other-tongue literacy would only create confusion. Oral communication in the surrounding languages is sufficient for satisfying the demands of daily living.

After Nkwen, English is the second language of choice for literacy, because it is an international language. The Nkwen realize that their community is no longer isolated from the world. English proficiency is indispensable for advancing beyond the realm of the village.
3.5.5 Summary
Use of Nkwen continues to be predominant in many domains of life. The Nkwen people have a good attitude toward their language. The Nkwen community has a language committee registered with NACALCO. There are numerous items in print as well as Nkwen radio broadcasts.

Pidgin is also widely spoken and understood by the general populace. It finds prominence in as many situations as the mother tongue does. Nkwen speakers live in an area that is partly urban and have, therefore, significant contact with outsiders with whom they must use either Pidgin or English. Many residents are educated, although most young people do not return to the area once they have completed their education.

3.5.5.1 Conclusions
Many members of society have an adequate proficiency in English, and many Christians possess their own English Bible. However, the elderly still lack a sufficient familiarity with English. For them Bible translation would be indispensable; unfortunately, it may be too late to complete such a project in their lifetime.

3.5.5.2 Recommendations
Nkwen borders the area of the Mendankwe and Mankon peoples and has good contact with them and their languages. For this reason Nkwen speakers should be tested on their comprehension of Mendankwe. A Mendankwe RTT would also help to clarify whether Nkwen and Mendankwe should be considered one language or two.

3.6 Pinyin
This section is a summary of information gathered from five different rapid appraisal interviews conducted on May 24 and 25, 2000, in each of the five Pinyin communities. For each interview there were a minimum of five community leaders present; for one interview there were more than twenty adults. In order to communicate clearly with the people, we hired a Pinyin guide and translator, Mr. Christopher Penn Ndifet, who lives in Buchi.

3.6.1 Dialect Situation
3.6.1.1 Locality
This language is spoken in five villages named Mesoh, Meshi, Mentin, Buchi, and Menka. Because the villages are clustered so tightly together, some people say that they are all one village. They are situated southwest of Bamenda in the Santa subdivision. The Pinyin-speaking community is governed by three main fondoms: Buchi, Menka, and Pinyin (which encompasses the three other fondoms of Mesoh, Meshi, and Mentin).

3.6.1.2 Names of People and Speech Variety
In four of these locations the people say that Pinyin (Pinyin) is their name and the name of their language. In the fifth village, however, people say they speak the Menka dialect and call themselves the Menka-Santa people. The reasons for this distinction appear to be political; the language is spoken exactly the same way in all five villages. None of the villages admitted to any differences of pronunciation or accent, and our guide from Buchi village confirmed that the Menka people we interviewed speak exactly as he himself does. For the sake of simplicity, this report will refer to the people and language of all five villages collectively as Pinyin. Grimes (2000) and the ALCAM (1984) list Bapinyi and Pelimp as alternative names.

3.6.1.3 History/Origins
The Pinyin people are of Widikum origin, “like the other Ngemba peoples.” One informant explained to us that the Menka people’s claim to an identity distinct from that of Pinyin is a recent development resulting from a disagreement. This person said that the Fon of Pinyin is the younger brother of the Fon of Menka, and that about fifteen years ago there was some question as to which of the two should be the rightful paramount fon. Today each has his own separate fondom. The subfons of Mesoh, Meshi, and Mentin acknowledge the younger brother as the paramount fon, but the older brother has retained all of the official artifacts associated with the traditional religion.

3.6.1.4 Linguistic Affiliation

Grimes (2000:51) reflects the changes recommended by subsequent research and lists Pinyin as follows:
3.6.1.5 Variation within Pinyin

This rapid appraisal survey confirmed that people report no dialectal differences within Pinyin. The Menka people admit that the other Pinyin villages speak just like themselves even though they disagree on the name of the language. Our guide from Buchi also confirmed this when we visited Menka village.

3.6.2 Multilingualism

As languages of wider communication, Pinyin people speak Pidgin and English. A few people have learned French in school. Most Pinyin adults say they speak Mungaka because of the Mungaka Bible and because in former days preaching was in Mungaka.

People say that Mankon “rhymes” with Pinyin. “We are together,” they claim. However, Pinyin children reportedly do not understand Mankon until at least the age of fifteen. Two villages did not even list Mankon among the languages they understand best. Note that comparing the Pinyin word list with those of Mankon dialects (Njong, Mbatu, and Mangkunge) gives an apparent cognicity of seventy-five percent (Seguin 1989:6), which is considered marginal (Bergman 1989:8.1.6).

Despite the apparent proximity of the Awing language group, the Pinyin respondents made only a passing mention of them. Pinyin and Awing speakers have minimal contact with one another. The people in Menka village went as far to say that Bafut is easier to understand than Awing. See the following table for comparison.

Following are the related languages that people in each village reported understanding, listed from best to least. This table makes obvious the fact that none of the neighboring languages is uniformly intelligible to all Pinyin speakers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5: Pinyin Multilingualism in Neighboring Languages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Best</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mesoh village:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Meshi village:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mentin village:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Buchi village:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Menka village:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Santa-Akum may refer to the Ngemba speech variety Akum (dialect of Mankon) in the Santa subdivision.

3.6.3 Language Vitality and Viability

3.6.3.1 Migration and Intermarriage

Migration out of the Pinyin area is not common, partly because few children continue their education past primary school. There is minimal migration into Pinyin villages, except for some of the schoolteachers who are from outside and the Fulani who come from the north to find good pasturceland. In Mesoh village a large crowd of silent Fulani onlookers observed the group interview. In the other villages we saw very few Fulani. Reportedly the Fulani do live in all five villages, yet their language was never even mentioned in four of these villages.

Pinyin people usually marry within their language community. They also intermarry with Bafut, Bali (Mungaka), Moghamo, and Awing. Some in Mesoh advise people not to marry outside of the village. In Meshi village people mentioned intermarrying with several additional people groups: Ashong, Baba, Alatening, and Bafacho. Literate men have the most freedom to choose their spouses from other places.
3.6.3.2 Language Use
In the general community
Some people said that they do not use Pidgin every day in their village but that they do use their mother tongue every day. Both Pinyin and Pidgin are used with friends, in the fields, and at the dispensary. In the home, women speak Pidgin to schoolchildren who are learning English but speak Pinyin to younger children. Going to market requires the use of Pidgin, although Pinyin is also spoken there. Announcements are given in Pinyin. Regional council meetings are either in English or Pidgin.

In schools
Teachers and children alike speak only proper English during class time. During recess the children speak Pinyin among themselves, except that they use Pidgin with Fulani children and other outsiders. Pinyin is not taught in schools.

In religious assemblies
Churches use a combination of English, Pidgin, and Pinyin for all parts of the service. Scripture is read in English. Only one church continues to use Mungaka, and this is only for a few songs and prayers. Most Pinyin people count themselves as members of a church. Traditional religious ceremonies are conducted purely in the mother tongue.

3.6.3.3 Language Maintenance and Shift
Pinyin appears to be thriving. It is used every day in the village, but Pidgin is not. Children under age six speak only Pinyin; they do not know Pidgin. Older children mix Pidgin and English with Pinyin. Adults see this mixing as a problem because they fear that the young people will make errors in public speaking. Parents are unconcerned about their children speaking Pidgin to them because they believe it is part of the process as their children learn English.

3.6.3.4 Standardization Efforts
A person by the name of Dr. Awa publishes a yearly Pinyin diary, and there is a small Pinyin-English dictionary. In various interviews over the years, Pinyin elites have expressed a strong interest in having their language developed.

3.6.4 Language Attitudes
Pinyin people like their language and want to see it in writing. They say that this would help to preserve the culture of their forefathers. People want a monolingual Pinyin dictionary because it would help them to develop deeper understanding of their own language.

Officially naming this language either Pinyin or Menka could antagonize one party or the other. The village of Menka was the last of five Pinyin-speaking villages visited. None of the first four villages gave any indication of the difficulties between the fons of Pinyin and Menka, but the problem became apparent when we used the name “Pinyin” at the beginning of the Menka interview. At that moment it seemed that the interview might be terminated prematurely. (Refer to History/Origins in section 3.6.1.) Our guide informed us that Buchi is neutral in the conflict, maintaining positive relationships with both sides. Therefore Buchi would be the best place for a foreigner to learn the language and have the respect of all the people.

Pinyin people have a good appetite for language learning. They told us, “The more dialects you know, the better your relationships will be.” In Mentin village, people are eager to read and write every language that they speak, mostly just for the sake of learning, but also for purposes of trade, intermarriage, and the exchange of students. People in Menka said the same; they believe that becoming literate in these languages would improve their oral communication and strengthen their relationships with other peoples.

Aside from Pinyin, English, and French, the two most popular choices for languages to read and write were Mungaka and Mankon. Concerning Mankon, Sadembouo and Hasselbring (1991:19) found that Pinyin adults had positive attitudes toward using a Mankon written form themselves but were opposed to using it in schools. All five Pinyin villages stated that they would like to read and write the Bali dialect of Mungaka. Attitudes toward literacy in Awing were also positive. There was decidedly less interest in learning Bafut and Nkwen; Mesoh village people said

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8The Fon of Pinyin possesses a copy of this limited-edition bilingual dictionary.
they did not want to read and write either of these languages even though they sometimes intermarry with Bafut people.

3.6.5 Summary

Pinyin appears to be thriving. It is used every day in the village, but Pidgin is not. Children under six speak only Pinyin; they do not know Pidgin. Pinyin people are unique in their diverse multilingualism and in their eagerness to read and write the languages of neighboring groups.

3.6.5.1 Conclusion

Possibly the only basis for promoting Mankon among Pinyin speakers would be their fairly positive attitude toward it. Pinyin speakers, however, report low comprehension of Mankon. It is, therefore, unlikely that a Mankon written standard would serve the Pinyin people very well. Pinyin has need of language development, mother tongue literacy, and translation. On the other hand, the political dispute between the two competing paramount fons would be a probable hindrance to such a project.

3.6.5.2 Recommendation

If objective evidence of Pinyin’s need for development is necessary, do RTTs of Mankon and Awing (seventy-four percent apparent cognates, see appendix 3) among the Pinyin. It would only be necessary to test one way, that is, Pinyin speakers’ comprehension of Mankon. Ruling out the possibility of using any of these other three languages as a written standard would make Pinyin a high priority for language development. Otherwise, proceed immediately with the development of Pinyin.

3.7 Awing

This RA group interview was conducted in the palace of the Fon of Awing without prior arrangement. The research team happened to arrive just as the fon’s council was finishing their council meeting, so the interview took place immediately with those present. The fon himself was travelling at the time. Sixteen men and one woman, representing all twelve of the village quarters, were present for the group interview.

3.7.1 Dialect Situation

3.7.1.1 Locality

Awing is the name of the village occupying the valley east of Mount Lefo, in the Santa subdivision, the Mezam division, of the North West Province. There is one large village made up of sixty quarters, and these are grouped into twelve sections, each having its own subchief. The names of these quarters are: Mbetu, Mbeme, Mbenjom, Mbenten, Ntenelah, Mbesoh, Mbemuh, Mbendeng, Tanjang, Nebele, Agheble, and Alameti. The fon’s palace is centrally located. The village itself seems somewhat removed from other language communities, surrounded by mountains and occupying one distinct valley.

3.7.1.2 Names of the People and Speech Variety

The people of Awing village call themselves the Mbwé’wi people and their language something like atembwé’wi or atembuluwe (the distinction was unclear). On the map the village is called Awing Bambulawe. All of the surrounding language groups as well as the ALCAM and the Ethnologue call it by the name Awing. There was much discussion among the interviewees regarding the name of the village, probably because of the large number of quarters and subchiefs. For the sake of consistency the language and people will be referred to by the name Awing.

3.7.1.3 History/Origins

The Awing people are of Widikum origin. They say they share common origins with the Mendankwe and Pinyin peoples. They do consider themselves one people with the Mendankwe but are ambivalent regarding their relationship to Pinyin people.

3.7.1.4 Linguistic Affiliation

The ALCAM (1983) lists two dialects of Awing: Mbwe’wi and Bamunkumbit.
Grimes (2000) lists Awing as a language with only one dialect: AWING (AWI, BAMBULUWE) Dialect: MBWE’WI. It has seventy-four percent lexical similarity with Bamukumbit, shown to be a separate language by Seguin (1994).

3.7.1.5 Variation within Awing

Although Awing is spoken exactly the same in most of the quarters, there are some slight differences in the speech of people who live near the borders. These include Aghebli, which borders Bamukumbit; Nepele, which borders Bamenyam and Baligam; and Mbenjom, which borders Bambili and Balikumbat. They say that through contact and intermarriage, the speech of these three groups has become somewhat like these neighboring languages. Awing speakers say they have absorbed other minority dialects that once existed. They say, “We understand them because we have lived with them a long time.” They do not, however, understand most of these neighboring languages (Bamenyam, Baligam, and Balikumbat). Therefore, the recommended location for an outsider to learn to speak Awing would be in the center of the village, near the fon’s palace.

3.7.2 Multilingualism

3.7.2.1 Related Languages

The Awing people speak Awing to people from Bambili, Bamukumbit, Mendankwe, Nkwen, Bafut, Pinyin, Mankon, and sometimes Akum. Each of these groups responds in their own vernacular. However, comprehension is acquired with contact. Of these speech varieties, Mendankwe is the easiest for Awing speakers to understand; it takes a young child three years of hearing Mendankwe to really understand it. The Awing consider themselves one people with the Mendankwe people. Akum is second, and Mankon was mentioned as the third easiest language to understand. Mankon, Bafut, and Pinyin are comprehensible to most Awing twelve year-olds. Children begin to understand Bamukumbit when they start going to market. Bambili, however, is not usually understood until age 21.

There was some debate about how readily Awing speakers understand Akum (Bagangu), but they all agreed that Akum comes second after Mendankwe in ease of comprehension. Solange Orabe, a member of this research team, questioned this because she, herself a mother-tongue speaker of Akum, understood very little of the Awing that she heard during the interview. Apparently Akum speakers need exposure to Awing to understand it. This concurs with the findings of Sadembouo, and Hasselbring (1991:21), that Awing speakers would accept Akum as a standard for writing but that Akum speakers considered Awing as only marginally belonging to their language grouping.

3.7.2.2 Languages of Wider Communication

Pidgin is spoken everyday in the village, and English use is common. The adults speak the best Pidgin because the young people now use English more often than Pidgin. French is not commonly spoken, but it is used for communication when traveling to francophone areas of Cameroon. It is taught as a subject in government schools. English needs translation, but nearly everyone understands Pidgin.

3.7.2.3 Languages of Religion

Awing, Pidgin, and English are all used in every church denomination for prayers, songs, and sermons. Many older Christians speak Mungaka because it was taught by the Presbyterians as a school subject years ago. The Bible was translated into the Bali dialect of Mungaka and was promoted for use in Awing churches. This practice has died out; today only a few prayers are said in Mungaka in one church. People say they are acquainted with Ndu (which would be either Limbum or Yamba) and Duala, which are used for some songs in one church.

3.7.3 Language Vitality and Viability

3.7.3.1 Migration and Intermarriage

There are a few foreigners living in Awing village. Most are retired teachers who have stayed; there are also traders, bricklayers, workers who clear land, and traditional healers. They do eventually learn to speak Awing while using Pidgin in the meantime. Language differences pose no problem for intermarriage. Awing people marry anyone of their own choosing, even Europeans. They said there are no restrictions because, “The Bible has made us to feel we are all one.”

Education causes some migration out of Awing village. Of those who complete higher education, very few come back to the village. Most remain outside in search of jobs.
3.7.3.2 Language Use

In the general community
Awing use is strong in domestic domains, except that Pidgin is preferred where there is contact with non-Awing people (at the local markets, big markets, and dispensaries).

In the schools
Schoolchildren speak Awing and English during recess and Pidgin if the teacher is not within hearing range. Speaking Awing is not discouraged. In class, however, students are permitted to speak only English. The instruction too is given in English, except for occasional explanations in Awing for young children.

In the churches
Awing is used in all parts of church services in all three of the main denominations, as are English and Pidgin. English must be translated because not everyone understands it; Pidgin reaches nearly everyone. Some people try to read the Bible in French at home. The following language use pattern applies to most people.

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<tr>
<th>Prayers</th>
<th>Songs</th>
<th>Sermons</th>
<th>Bible Reading</th>
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<td>Awing, P, E, F Duala, Ndu</td>
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<td>Awing, P, E</td>
<td>Awing, P</td>
<td>Awing, P, E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>Awing, P, E</td>
<td>Awing, P, E, Duala, Ndu</td>
<td>Awing, P, E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*P=Pidgin  E=English  F=French*

In the public domain
Traditional religious ceremonies are conducted strictly in Awing. Announcements too are in Awing. Pidgin is used for regional council meetings.

3.7.3.3 Language Maintenance and Shift
Adults say that the youth do speak Awing often in the village, both among themselves and with their parents. However, young people also like to practice the English that they learn in school. English has the additional benefit of confidentiality, enabling them to keep secrets from their parents. There is a tendency to mix Pidgin and English, a habit of which parents disapprove.

Second language acquisition for the Awing people appears to be shifting from Pidgin to English. Many adults do not know English well enough to even distinguish it from Pidgin, but the younger generation reportedly speaks English well because the majority of them attend school where it is the language of instruction. About half of the children continue their education through secondary school. As further evidence of the shifting sociolinguistic situation, today’s Awing youth understand English better than Mendankwe. Young people are said to use English to keep secrets from their parents. About English, they said, “We are born, and we grow in it,” implying that English is very much a part of their lives.

3.7.3.4 Standardization Efforts
To date, Awing standardization efforts are minimal. Publications are limited to a phonetic description of the language, a diary, and the village anthem.

3.7.4 Language Attitudes
Awing youth are proud of their mother tongue. Families who have relocated outside of the language area strongly encourage their children to speak the mother tongue. Interviewees expressed great interest in reading and writing Awing mostly for reasons of preserving their cultural identity, but also because they know the names of flora only in Awing.

Awing people have no interest in learning to read and write any Cameroonian language other than their own, not even Pinyin or Mendankwe. They want their children to read and write only Awing because literacy in a related
language or dialect may pose a threat to the viability of Awing. Attitudes toward literacy in English and French are extremely favorable. People see these languages as valuable mediums of communication with the outside world, providing access to information through books.

3.7.5 Summary
Awing appears to be a vital language, although language shift is having a strong impact on the younger generation. Most children do attend school, and they learn English there. Awing people report some degree of intercomprehension with the following groups: Bambili, Bamukumbit, Mendankwe, Nkwen, Bafut, Pinyin, Mankon, and Akum. Awing people have no interest in using any neighboring language as a written standard; they feel it would be a threat to the preservation of their own language.

3.7.5.1 Conclusions
It is unlikely that literacy in any other Ngemba language would find acceptance among the people of Awing; they are clearly opposed to the idea. Language attitudes preclude the possibility of using any one of these languages as a written standard for the Awing people. Further testing of intercomprehension with other Ngemba speech varieties is unnecessary because of marginal lexical similarity (see appendix 2), low RTT scores with Mankon and Nkwen (see appendix 3), and the Awing people’s declared opposition to the idea of using another written language.

3.7.5.2 Recommendations
Comprehension of Mankon among the Awing may be unlikely, due to the geographical isolation of Awing. However, given the prestige of the Mankon language, we should conduct RTT testing in one direction to determine the limits of extendibility for Mankon. Otherwise, we highly recommend developing Awing literacy and translation materials.

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Ngemba Cluster Overview
All of the Ngemba speech varieties covered in this survey report are vital and seem to take precedence in many domains of daily language use. All continue to be transmitted to the next generation as the primary mode of communication despite competition from Pidgin and English. Pinyin stands out as being the group demonstrating the least evidence of language shift toward English.

Attitudes of each people group toward their own mother tongue are very positive, and all expressed a desire for mother tongue literacy and translation. Most groups insist that their own speech variety is the only acceptable choice for a written standard, with the possible exceptions of Bambui and Pinyin. Mankon seems to be the most widely understood dialect/language of the cluster. Nkwen has recently organized an active language committee that is registered with NACALCO, and all of these groups have some written or printed materials in the mother tongue, however minimal. Some communities are more literate than others, with Bambui, Bambili, Mendankwe, and Nkwen being the most highly educated.

4.2 Recommendations for Further Survey
- Conduct RAs of Mbrerewi (Mundum I), Anyang (Mundum II), and Bagangu (Akum) to follow up on Grimes’ suggestion that they may comprise their own language, separate from Mankon and the other Ngemba languages. Word list comparison between Anyang and Mbrerewi gives a cognate range of 82-92% (Seguin 1989:8), indicating that their inherent intelligibility should be evaluated by doing RTT testing between them. A word list still needs to be collected for Bagangu (Akum).
- Bafut RTT testing among other Ngemba languages to determine the extendibility of the Bafut New Testament, notably among speakers of Beba’ and Bambui, and to verify whether or not Beba’ is part of Bafut. Previous word list comparisons of Beba’ and Bafut (Bufe) indicated a shared cognicity range of 70-82% (Seguin 1989:8).

9Prior to the completion of this report, an RA survey was conducted in Mundum II in February 2001. See Brye and Swiri, forthcoming.
10An RA survey was also conducted in Beba’ in February 2001. See Brye, forthcoming.
• Mankon RTT testing among the other Ngemba languages, especially in Bambili and Bambui with the goal of finding out whether Mankon literacy could extend to speakers of these languages. Mendankwe and Nkwen also could be tested with a Mankon RTT, but language attitudes and the existence of a language committee deem it unnecessary. To what degree is Mankon inherently intelligible for these groups?
• RTT between Mendankwe and Nkwen to answer the question of whether they are actually distinct languages or dialects of only one. Their shared cognate range is 80-90% (Seguin 1989:8).
• Do RTTs of Mankon and Awing in Pinyin. Ruling out the possibility of using one of them as a written standard would make Pinyin a high priority for language development.

4.3 Recommendations for Language Development
• Develop Mankon and explore the promotion of Mankon literacy in Pinyin and other groups on an experimental basis.
• Develop Bambili-Bambui as a single language project, if the two groups are willing to collaborate. Or they could assist one another in developing two written standards simultaneously, possibly adapting the Bafut New Testament and literacy materials. Dr. Joseph Mfonyam, translator of the Bafut New Testament, could serve in a consultant role. Some linguistic training would be helpful to the Bambui religious leaders already working on translation.
• Develop Mendankwe and Nkwen together, pending the results of future intelligibility testing.
• Develop both Pinyin and Awing, if future RTT testing reveals that comprehension of Mankon is too low.

4.4 Suggested Modifications to the Ethnologue
Ethnologue:
• Remove Mombu from the listing of Ngemba dialects. Mankon speakers are unacquainted with Mombu. They were unable to identify this name.
• Add current census figure projections to the entries on each Ngemba language.
• Add information about recently formed language committees (Nkwen).
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Ngemba Excerpts from the Ethnologue (14th edition)

AWING (AWI, BAMBULUWE) [AZO]

BAFUT (BUFE, FU, FUT, BEFE) [BFD]

BAMBILI (BAMBUI) [BAW]
10,000 or fewer (1984 ALCAM). Bambili and Bambui villages east of Bamenda, along Ring Road, Tuba Subdivision, Mezam Division, North West Province. Linguistic affiliation: Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Bambili, Bantoid, Southern, Wide Grassfields, Narrow Grassfields, Mbam-Nkam, Ngemba. Dialects: BAMBILI (MBILI, MBELE, MBOGOE), BAMBUI (MBUI). Inherent intelligibility is low between them and Nkwen and Mendankwe. They associate more with Bafut than with Nkwen and Mendankwe. Grammar. Literacy rate in first language: Below 1%. Literacy rate in second language: 15% to 25%.

BAMUKUMBIT (BAMUNKUM, BAMOUKOMBIT, BAMENKOMBIT, MANGKONG) [BQT]

KPATI [KOC]

MENDANKWE (MANDANKWE) [MFD]
10,000 or more (1984 ALCAM). North and east of Bamenda, either side of Ring Road and in the mountainous circle of Mendankwe Nkw, Tuba Subdivision, Mezam Division, North West Province. Linguistic affiliation: Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Wide Grassfields, Narrow Grassfields, Mbam-Nkam, Ngemba. Dialects: NKWEN (BAFRENG), MENDANKWE (MUNDA, BAMENDA). Related to Ngemba, Bafut, Pinyin, Awing, and Bambili. Speakers may have functional intelligibility of the Mankon dialect of Ngemba. Literacy rate in first language: Below 1%. Literacy rate in second language: 15% to 25%.

NGEMBA (MEGIMBA, MOGIMBA, NGOMBA, NGUEMBA) [NGE]

PINYIN [PNY]
Appendix 2: ALCAM Classification

Excerpt from the section “Liste de Langues Par Zone,” pages 78–79

[913] **mankon** (<= ngemba < locuteurs)
   — man𝑘uŋ (<= ngemba, bandeng, bande, mankon < administration
      = bando < mungaka
      = nkun < bafut
      = mukohn < lta’)
   — shomba (= bamechom, alamatson)
   — songwa (= bangwa, ngwa)
   — mbutu (= bambutu, alamutu)
   — njong (= banjong)
   — bagangu (= akum < administration)

[914] **bambili** (<= ngemba < locuteurs)
   — mbili (= bambili < administration
      = mbol < voisins
      = mbøgo < mangkunga)
   — mbui (= bambui < administration)

[915] **nkwen** (<= ngemba < locuteurs)
   — nkwen (= bafreng)
   — mandankwe (= munda, hamenda)

[916] **pinyin** (<= ngemba < locuteurs)
   — pinyin (= bapinyi
      = palimo < voisins
   — alatining (= alatening)

[917] **awing** (<= ngemba < locuteurs)
   — mbwɔ’wi (= awing < administration
      = awi < mankuŋ
      = bambuluwe < bali
   — bamunkumbiti (= bamunkum)

clé: (pages 21-22)
 [ ] encadrent le numéro d’identification de la langue et précèdent le glossonyme standard
 ( ) encadrent des relations d’équivalence ou d’inclusion entre appellations diverses et le glossonyme qui précède la parenthèse
 — précède le glossonyme propre de chacun des dialectes de la langue figurant en entrée
 = il relie le glossonyme standard ou propre qui précède la parenthèse à ses diverses appellations dues à l’administration, aux missions, aux auteurs ou à des voisins
 <= symbole de l’inclusion; il signifie que le glossonyme qui précède est inclus dans l’ensemble dénommé par l’appellation qui suit immédiatement le symbole (e.g., le mankon est inclus dans le ngemba)
 < relie une appellation, une équivalence ou une inclusion à son origine ou à son auteur
Appendix 3: Cognicity Percentages Matrices

The following table is taken from Seguin (1989:6-8). Seguin and Domché-Teko obtained some word lists from the CREA (Centre for Anthropological Studies and Research) office in Yaoundé and collected other lists themselves. All of the 120-item word lists were analyzed using the Wordsurv program to arrive at the following matrix. The name of each speech variety is followed by its *ALCAM* number.

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</table>

Cognate Ranges (%) grouped by ALCAM Code

911—Anyang/Mberewi 82–92
912—Beba’/Mbefe 70–82
913—Manguwo 93–99
Mbatu 95–99
Njong 92–98
Shomba 90–96
Songwa

914—Mbili/Mbou 73–85
915—Mandankwe/Nkwen 80–90
916—Alatining/Pinyin 72–84
917—Bamukumbit/Mbwa’wi (Awing) 67–81
**Appendix 4: Previous RTT Results**

The following table is from page 9 of Sadembouo, and Hasselbring’s 1991 report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION TESTED:</th>
<th>Comprehension of: (as a percent and standard deviation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>91 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bafut</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bambili</td>
<td>26 (13)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mankon</td>
<td>39 (19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mundum</td>
<td>65 (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nkwen</td>
<td>48 (17)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The first figure is the overall mean score in terms of percentage points. The figure in parentheses represents the standard deviation percentage.*
Appendix 5: Bambili Text

Taken from an archived cassette.
Note: Hometown testing indicated that the quality of this text is questionable.

TRANSCRIPTION:

What I am about to tell you is how I went to Bambui and stayed there for two years to study and had learned how to teach when we came out. When I left Bambui, the first station I was sent to was Akwaya. I went to Akwaya with Jacob Alounjang (the father of twins), who is at Ndop at the present time. When we left, we took one day by vehicle to Mamfe.

(1) How long did it take to travel to Mamfe --one day

The road was very bad. At that time traffic from Bamenda to Mamfe was one way. On the other hand, travel from Mamfe to Bamenda was also one way since the road was very small.

ELIMINATED QUESTION:

(2) Why could they only go up to Bamenda? --in those days the road was one-way

When we got to Mamfe, we slept there for one day with the reverend father at the mission. The father advised us how to travel the following day.

(3) What did the father tell them? --He advised them how to travel the following day.

ELIMINATED QUESTION:

(4) When were they to move to Akwaya? --the following day

He got a guide for us who was from Akwaya who was also a teacher. He informed this guide that we were traveling with him to Akwaya. The guide was very, very happy. On this particular occasion five new teachers were there.

(5) How many teachers were there? --five (six)

We were five new teachers, including the guide there were six of us. There were also three children who were boys and were quite good at traveling. The reverend father also advised us to buy all the food we would need while traveling.

(6) What did the father advise them to buy?--all the food they would need

because we shall be on the road for at least eight days. For about seven or eight days if we do not travel very fast. We went out and bought groundnuts and corn paste (cooked in banana leaves—fufu without soup). We also bought palm kernel and banana. We also bought sardines (fish in a tin). The reverend father also advised us to dress in a way that would not disturb our easy movement. That we should go to the market and buy clothes that would be suitable for the journey, especially clothes that have pores, that air will enter easily and will not be hot.

(7) Why did they need loose clothing? --to move/travel easily, let air move

The following morning at 7 am we got up and started traveling. The most interesting thing that we saw on the road was a very big stream. This stream was very big. The white man called it Cross River. The Cross River was a very big stream. We don’t have this kind of stream. To cross it you need a canoe.

(8) Why did they cross the stream in a boat? --because the stream was very big

If you cannot cross by canoe, you cross by a bridge, which is called hammock. There are two bridges. The first one is not very bad. The next one is very long, as long as from the fon’s palace to Nsewi. As we stood there, we noticed some very large animals in the stream. There were many large animals lying on the stones whose names I do not know.

(9) Where were the animals lying? --on the stones

We were told that we want to cross by canoe. When we looked at a canoe, it looked like a large dugout wooden bowl. We saw a small child whom I guess was about class three.
(10) **Who did they see in the boat?** --a small child who was about class three

The child was holding a canoe paddle, and we were informed that it was this child who was going to bring us across in the canoe. Everyone was afraid. Our guide went into the canoe first and asked us to follow him. For me personally it was not strange because I had lived with my father in Kumba. So I had seen a canoe before, and we used to catch fish at Mbonge. The rest of our companions were afraid. The guide convinced them, and when they got into the canoe, they closed their eyes. So as we went across the stream, they all closed their eyes and did not know what was going by.

(11) **They used the boat to do what?** --to cross the stream

They did not know what was happening until they got to the other bank of the river. They asked me what they were going to do and whether the canoe will not fall, and they will all die. So I informed them that we have completely crossed the river.

(12) **What did he tell them?** --that they crossed the river, not to be afraid

EXPLANATION FOR ELIMINATING QUESTIONS TWO AND FOUR:

HT—For the Bambili Hometown Test Tape, fifteen individuals were tested on a text containing a total of twelve questions. Based on all of the completed tests, the two questions with the fewest correct answers were eliminated, numbers two and four. This left a text containing ten good questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bambili Story Question Number</th>
<th>From 10 tests Correct Answers</th>
<th>From 10 tests Incorrect/No Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 6: Bambui Text

Told by a retired teacher.
Recorded at the palace of the Fon of Bambui.
May 30, 2000

Note: This story has appeared in the beekeeping book written in English by this man, but we do not believe that many people have read it because most are not literate.

TRANSCRIPTION:
Now I’m going to say something in connection with bees. Concerning bees, I’ve worked with bees for fifteen years.

ELIMINATED QUESTION:
(1) How long has he worked with bees? --fifteen years

One day, a European lady came and saw me and said that we should go to where I keep my bees. As we went there, I wore my beekeeping suit.

ELIMINATED QUESTION:
(2) Who went to see the bees? --the man, a European lady, and a child

The child with whom I was working also wore his bee clothes. We opened one beehive suddenly. One bee came out, entered my bee dress because there was a hole which I did not know about.

(3) What did one bee do? --entered his dress/clothes

As it came in, suddenly I felt a sting on my head.

(4) Where did he get stung? --on his head

I shook myself and held my hand trying to rub the place. As I was rubbing it, more holes appeared on my veil because my veil was an old one.

(5) Why did his veil have holes? --it was old

More bees entered the veil and stung me all over. I started screaming, shouting, and crying.

What did he do when he got stung? --screamed/shouted/cried

People began saying that I would die because bees had stung me.

(6) What did people say? --that he would die

Many people came around to see what was happening with me. I began feeling pains in my body. Again, my body was itching.

(7) What was he feeling in his body? --pains and itching

The lady opened her car for me to go in.

(8) Who opened the car for him to go in? --the lady

And as I was entering, more bees followed me into the vehicle. More again found their way through openings in the vehicle and entered. A lady said we should go up to Bamenda to a hospital so the doctor might attend to me. I said I had no money with me. I suggested that we should go to my house and get some money. We rushed to my compound. There I took money.

(9) Why did he go home? --to get money

There were still some bees in the vehicle, as I was entering.

(10) What was in the car when he got back in? --more bees

I jumped into the vehicle, and she drove the vehicle very fast.

(11) How did the lady drive? --very fast
We went fast and entered a hospital called Good Samaritan along Cow Street in town. I came out and saw the doctor. He asked me what happened.

(12) **What did the doctor ask him?** --what had happened

I told him that I went with a lady to my bee farm to have snapshots, and the bees came and stung me. More bees came out, stung me, and I began shivering. That’s what caused me to come to the hospital. The doctor sent me somewhere, and I went there. I was given injections and some tablets to eat.

(13) **What was he given?** --injections and some tablets to eat

I was placed on a bed, and I lay there quietly. I was there for about two hours.

(14) **How long was he in bed?** --about two hours

About 4 pm, my body began returning to normal. About 4:30 I was fully recovered. I reported to the doctor that I was normal, and he discharged me.

---

**EXPLANATION FOR ELIMINATING QUESTIONS ONE AND TWO:**
For the Bambui Hometown Tape, thirteen individuals were tested. Based on all completed tests, the two questions most often missed were eliminated from the final computations. These were numbers one and two. This left a text containing of thirteen questions.

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<th>From 12 tests</th>
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<td>Incorrect/No Responses</td>
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Appendix 7: RTT Results for Bambili Speakers

Dialect Intelligibility Testing in Bambili with Mbui

HT—For the Bambili Hometown Test Tape, fifteen individuals were tested on a text containing a total of twelve questions. Based on all of the completed tests, the two questions with the fewest correct answers were eliminated, numbers two and four. This left a text containing ten good questions.

Mbui—For the Bambui Test Tape 5, Bambili respondents were disqualified for various reasons (inability to respond to questions, unwillingness to continue, or score below sixty percent). Therefore, ten tests were accepted for the final computations.

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</table>

Mean: 83.5 | 79.4

Standard deviation: 10.3 | 18.4
Appendix 8: RTT Results for Bambui Speakers

Dialect Intelligibility Testing in Bambui with Mbili

HT—For the Bambui Hometown Tape, thirteen individuals were tested. Based on all completed tests, the two questions most often missed were eliminated from the final computations. These were numbers one and two. This left a test containing of thirteen questions.

Mbili—For the Bambili Test Tape, two respondents were disqualified (unable to answer and unwilling to continue). Therefore, twelve tests were accepted in the final calculations.

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Mean   92.7  59.6
Standard deviation 7.3  25.0
Appendix 9: Rapid Appraisal Questionnaires

NGEMBA GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE

Notes taken by: _____________________     Date: __________
Interviewer: _______________________     Time: _________
Researchers present:__________________  # of people interviewed: Male:_______
Information:              Female: ________
Village (note on the map): ____________________ Subdivision: _____________________________
Reported Population: _______________Interior: _____________ Exterior: _____________

DIALECTOLOGY
- Name of the people:
- Name of the language:
- Origins/History of the people?
- Villages (with use of a map of the area):
  (a) In which villages is your language spoken?
  (b) In which villages is a different language spoken?
    Name of village:    Name of language:

Where do people speak …

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exactly the same</th>
<th>Slight differences in accent/tone/etc.</th>
<th>Different but you understand</th>
<th>No Understanding</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

Are there dialects of your language? Y / N  List these:

Closely related speech varieties (dialects): intercomprehension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Variety:</th>
<th>You speak</th>
<th>They speak</th>
<th>Slowly/ Normally</th>
<th>Can a child of 6 understand?</th>
<th>One people?</th>
<th>Same origins?</th>
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NGEMBA speech varieties

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<th>You speak</th>
<th>They speak</th>
<th>Slowly/ Normally</th>
<th>Can a child of 6 understand?</th>
<th>One people?</th>
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<tr>
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</table>
Mankon

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<th>Shomba (Chomba)</th>
<th>Mbatu (Bagangu)</th>
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<tr>
<td>s</td>
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NON-linguistically related speech varieties: MULTILINGUALISM

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<th>They speak</th>
<th>Slowly/ Normally</th>
<th>Can a child of 6 understand?</th>
<th>One people?</th>
<th>Same origins?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saamba-leeko</td>
<td>Y/N</td>
<td>s n</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y / N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mengambo</td>
<td></td>
<td>s n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngombale</td>
<td></td>
<td>s n</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngwe</td>
<td></td>
<td>s n</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mundani</td>
<td></td>
<td>s n</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moghamo</td>
<td></td>
<td>s n</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mungaka</td>
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<td>s n</td>
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<td>Ngame mbo</td>
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<td>s n</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meta’</td>
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<td>s n</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Babanki</td>
<td></td>
<td>s n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which of these languages do you understand the best? ______________________

Which of these languages do you understand the least? ______________________

Do you speak Pidgin everyday in your village? _____________________________

Who speaks Pidgin the best? youth adult men adult women

VITALITY AND VIABILITY

Migration and Intermarriage

With whom do you most often intermarry? _____________________________

- restrictions? _____________________________

YOUTH:

Do children attend primary school? All More than ½ Less than ½ Very few

Secondary school? All More than ½ Less than ½ Very few

- Are there children who come from other locations to attend school here? Y / N Are they many? Y / N

Do young people return to the village or prefer to live in town after finishing school? Why?

FOREIGNERS:

- Do foreigners come to live here? Y / N Why?

- From where? __________ Are they many? __________

- If they stay in your village, what language do you speak with them? __________
**Language Use**

Which languages are used most often in the village?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOMESTIC</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>Pidgin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in the home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with age-mates / friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the field</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at the local market</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at the big market</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at the dispensary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCHOOL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>during recess</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instruction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PUBLIC</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>traditional religious ceremonies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>announcements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regional council meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**[Key: MT=Mother Tongue  P=Pidgin  E=English]**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHURCHES:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>prayers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sermons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>songs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are there Many / Few Christians in your village?

Many / Few Muslims?

Many / Few Traditional religion followers?

**“Language Shift” Indications**

Do the youth here speak another language more than the MT? Y / N

Which language(s)?

How do the youth feel about their MT?

Do you think the youth mix MT with Pidgin or English? Y / N  Is this Good or Bad?

- If your child speaks Pidgin to you, how does it make you feel?

**Standardization Efforts**

- What has been written in your language? (songs, prayers, Bible portions, other books?)

Are you interested in reading and writing in your MT?

Is there a literacy program for your MT?

**LINGUISTIC ATTITUDES**

If someone wanted to learn your language and have the respect of all people, in what village or quarter should they live?

Where is your language spoken the best?

What dialect of your language *(after your own)* would you choose to read and write?
Would you like your children to learn to read/write in…

Would you like to learn to read/write in…

Why?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bafut</th>
<th>Mankon</th>
<th>Nkwen</th>
<th>MT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Apart from your own language, which languages would you choose to read and write?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHURCH LEADERS

Interviewer: __________________________ Date: _________________

Church Name/Denomination: ___________________________

Language Group: ___________

Pastor’s name: ___________________________

Village: ___________________________

General Information

What is your mother tongue? Do you speak the local language? No A Little Well

The majority of this village is: Christian Muslim Traditional Other

Are there other Christian denominations? If yes, which ones? Which is the largest?

When was this church established in this village?

How many people attend your services regularly?

Language Use in the Church

During church services in which language is the Bible read?

How many people own their Bibles in your congregation? Very few Half Most

Which language(s) are used for:

Songs?

Bible reading? Is it interpreted into the MT? y n Why?

Announcements? Are these interpreted into the MT? y n Why?

The Sermon? Is it interpreted into the MT? y n Why?

How? Prepared in advance Phrase by phrase In resume form at the end

Are there meetings for youth? y n Which language is used?

Are there Bible studies? y n Which language is used?

Does the presence of foreigners in the service require you to use another language? y n Which language?

Are there people who don’t understand the languages used in church? y n Who?

What religious materials exist in the MT?

Language Attitudes:

What do you think about the use of Pidgin (or other LWC) in church?

Is the use of the MT encouraged by the leaders of this church? For the services? y n

For other meetings? y n Which ones?

Do members of your church express interest in - Reading and writing in their MT? y n

- Having religious materials in the MT? y n

Is a translation of the Bible into the MT absolutely needed? Why?

Would you be willing to work in close collaboration with the other denominations on a Bible translation project? What contribution do you feel you could make to a translation project?
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SCHOOL OFFICIALS

Interviewer: _________________      Date: _________________
School name: _________________      Language group: _________________
Instructor’s name: _________________      Village: _________________
What is your MT? _________________

How long you have been living in this village?   Do you speak the local language?

School Information
Up to which level are courses offered in this school?   How many students are in each class?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary School</th>
<th>Secondary School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 1:</td>
<td>Form 1:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 2:</td>
<td>Form 2:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 3:</td>
<td>Form 3:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 4:</td>
<td>Form 4:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 5:</td>
<td>Form 5:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 6:</td>
<td>Upper 6th:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 7:</td>
<td>Lower 6th:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How many of the students belong to the MT language group?
Most   More than ½   Less than ½   Few

What are the largest language groups represented in this school? (1)   (2)   (3)

Do you have the impression that most of the MT students come to school?
-From how many kilometers away do the MT students come to school?

Do many students continue their education after finishing school here?
Where must they go to continue their education?

Language Use
Which language do you use most often in class?
Which language do the students use when they don’t understand something?
Do you sometimes use their mother tongue?

Which language(s) do you use most often during recess to speak with the children?
During recess do children from (language group) speak to each other in their MT?
During recess, in what language do the children from (language group) speak to the children from other villages?

Language Attitudes
Do you think it is helpful for children to learn to read and write in their own language?
Would you like to see the MT introduced as a language of instruction in the school?
Would you be willing to assist in a MT teaching program?

After English, what language would you choose as a language of instruction for the school in this village?

What role would you be able to play in the development of the MT language for classroom use?
REFERENCES


Demo 87. *Deuxième recensement général de la population et de l’habitat*. Yaoundé: 2e RGPH, Cameroun/FNUAP.


Consult also these resources:
