

**RAPID APPRAISAL SOCIOLINGUISTIC
SURVEY OF BEBA**

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ABSTRACT

This report represents field research in the villages of Beba and Bombe, the two villages of the Beba speech variety previously thought to be a dialect of Bafut. The findings indicate that Beba is a language separate from Bafut.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A rapid appraisal sociolinguistic survey of the Beba speech variety located in Cameroon's North West Province was carried out at the request of Dr. Joseph Mfonyam, an SIL linguist and mother-tongue Bafut speaker. While developing literature in his language, Dr. Mfonyam observed that mother tongue Beba-speakers seemed not to understand Bafut well, yet the Beba speech variety had been linguistically classified as a Bafut dialect by both the *Ethnologue* and the *Atlas Linguistique du Cameroun [ALCAM]*. He suspected that Beba was linguistically nearer to Mankon than to Bafut.

In response to Dr. Mfonyam's request, sociolinguistic field research was carried out in the two Beba-speaking villages. Taking into account the size of the team and the distances and time constraints involved, a helicopter was used to reach both villages. The first visit occurred February 15, 2001 in Beba village with language surveyors Edward and Elizabeth Brye of SIL, and three doctoral students from the Department of African Languages and Linguistics at the University of Yaounde I: Pius Akumbu, Roseta Swiri, a mother-tongue speaker of Mankon's northern dialect, and Flora Bolima. The language survey in Bombe village took place on May 25, 2001 in Anteht-Techa Quarter with Edward Brye, Heidi Anderson, and Susanne Krueger of SIL; and Pius Akumbu and Roseta Swiri of the University of Yaounde I.

We are grateful for the welcome received from regional and local government, church, and traditional leaders, without whose cooperation and participation this mission would not have been possible.

1.1 Linguistic Classification

As mentioned in the introduction, Beba had been classified as a dialect of the Bafut language:

Dieu and Renaud (1983) classify Beba under the code of [912] and as part of Bafut, as follows: Niger-Kordofan, Niger-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Bantu, Grassfields, East Grassfields, Ngemba, Bafut, Beba.

Grimes (2000) lists Beba and Bombe villages as speaking a dialect of Bafut with a linguistic classification code of [BFD] and a linguistic classification of Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Wide Grassfields, Narrow Grassfields, Mbam-Nkam, Ngemba.

1.2 Names

The residents of Beba village call themselves and their language "Beba." In the village of Bombe the people refer to themselves as "Bombe" and to their mother tongue as "Bombe-Beba." For the remainder of this paper, the speech of residents from both villages will be referred to as "Beba" and the people as "Beba speakers."

1.3 Location and Population

Bombe village is located in the Akwaya Sub-division of the Manyu Division. Beba village is located in the Benakuma Sub-division of the Mezam Division. Beba and Bombe

residents enjoy regular interaction with one another, despite the full day required to trek between the two villages (see the map in appendix 4). Note that they would have to travel through the homeland of two or three other language groups to visit one another.

Beba village group interviewees revealed there are the following quarters:

1. Nsoka	500
2. Upper Mbekunyam	750
3. Lower Mbekunyam	1,000
4. Ntadiobo	500
5. Muala	800
6. Mbamba (location of a market)	800
7. Shisong	1,000
8. Fombe (location of a market)	1,000
9. Agah	<u>1,000</u>
Beba Village 9 Quarters: Total	7,350

Residents of these nine quarters speak the same language, and there is easy access between the quarters.

In Bombe, there is a total population of roughly 750 distributed among five quarters: Anteh-Bomekoh, Anteh-Bondah, Anteh-Tetchu, Anteh-Akunekeh, Anteh-Bendeh. No variation of speech exists between residents of these quarters.

<i>Village</i>	<i>1987 Census</i>	<i>2002 Extrapolation¹</i>	<i>Self-Reported</i>
Beba	1,504	2,180	6,000 ² or 7,350 ³
Bombe	<u>524</u>	<u>760</u>	<u>750</u>
TOTAL	2,028	2,940	6,750 or 8,000

1.4 History of the People

Beba village residents indicated that their people originated in Widikum, moved to Bamenda's Ntarikon Quarter, then to Mbengwi in the Meta' language region, later migrating to Bafut-speaking Ndenenkong and a nearby village called Mbobom before finally settling at their present locality. All of this took place prior to World War I.

There was probably a split into two Beba-speaking villages with a small group continuing past Beba and onward toward present-day Bombe.

1.5 Previous Research

In 1989, Lawrence Seguin and Engelbert Domche-Teko gathered wordlists and did a lexicostatistical analysis of the Ngemba speech forms, yielding the following percentages of similarity of Beba and the Ngemba languages surrounding it:

¹ The extrapolations are based on the assumption that the 2.9 percent annual population growth that occurred throughout Cameroon during 1976 to 1987 continued at this rate in both Beba-speaking villages from 1987 to the present.

² During the group interview Beba interviewees giggled slightly when their spokespersons claimed a village population of 6,000. (Those who reported this figure also indicated that the residents of their sister-village, Bombe, numbered 3,000, but Bombe village interviewees themselves claimed a local population of only 750 speakers.)

³ The village total obtained by adding populations of quarters results in a sum that is higher (7,350) than the village total given from the estimate (6,000). Either figure is much greater than the extrapolated estimate of 2,180.

Anyang (Mundum II) [911]
 87 Mberewi [Mundum I] [911]
78 72 Beba [912]
 78 77 **76 Bafut** (Bufe, the main Bafut dialect) [912]
 81 83 **74** 82 Mankunge (Mankon's Northern Dialect) [913]

Bergman (1989:8.1.6) indicated that 70 percent lexical similarity was the agreed upon minimum threshold above which intelligibility testing (Casad 1974) would be useful to determine if two or more speech varieties might be able to share a common written form. In 1991, Sadembouo and Hasselbring carried out intelligibility testing using Recording Text Testing (RTT) of the various languages of the Ngemba Cluster to determine which speech forms might be grouped together to use the same written form. But time constraints and difficult travel conditions prevented them from carrying out testing in Beba-speaking villages.

1.6 Research Objectives

The objectives of this language survey were:

- To estimate Beba-speakers' comprehension of Bafut and, secondarily, also of Mankon—the two largest languages of the Ngemba linguistic subfamily.
- To determine if Beba might be a dialect of Bafut or a distinct language.
- Identify the languages that village residents would prefer to read and write.

These objectives were accomplished by the methodologies mentioned in the next section.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The sociolinguistic research approach employed was the "Rapid Appraisal" [RA] language survey technique which involves interviewing groups and select individuals, as well as eliciting a 126-word list and then carrying out a lexicostatistical analysis of these lists (Bergman 1991; Stalder 1996). The purpose of the RA is to quickly assess dialectology, multilingualism, and language vitality and viability. This method was expanded to include modified Recorded Text Testing (Casad 1974) for groups called RA-RTT (Stalder 1996) in order to estimate an upper limit of Beba-speakers' comprehension of the texts of Mankon and Bafut.⁴

3.0 RESEARCH RESULTS

Eleven men and two women attended the group interview at Bombe. At Beba thirty men and eleven women were present. A teacher at the school served as translator for the group. At both locations, there was vigorous interaction among group members before a few of the leaders responded to questions.

3.1 Lexicostatistics

The research team brought a 126-word ALCAM list that had been elicited previously of the speech variety at Beba village.⁵ Our elicitation of eighteen words completed the original list. No wordlist had been collected in Bombe village, so we elicited one there and later compared it to the Beba list using the "apparent cognate" approach. The Bombe and Beba lists share more than a 94 percent apparent cognates. (See appendix 1 for these lists.)

⁴ Simons (1979:25) states that the group method for intelligibility testing is appropriate for finding the "upper potential" of a group's comprehension.

⁵ The appended wordlist was elicited by Linguist Jean-Paul Warnier of the University of Pennsylvania of a speaker named Patrick Aghack who, at the time, was an 18-year-old student enrolled in class seven studies.

3.2 Dialectology

Representatives of Beba and Bombe stated during the group interviews that no variation is reported to exist between the speech of residents of the two villages, irrespective of quarter. This and the fact that the Bombe and Beba wordlists are nearly identical suggest that no dialects of Beba speech appear to exist.

3.3 Multilingualism

Beside the mother tongue, Beba speakers speak two main languages:

- Pidgin English, the trade language throughout the southwest and northwest provinces that is used for communicating with those who do not understand Beba
- English, used in school and other public events and reading aloud.

Of special interest to us were any indications that another language within the Ngemba linguistic subfamily—especially Bafut or Mankon⁶—might be sufficiently understood to be used as a standard for written or oral communication.

Pidgin English

Pidgin is the language of wider communication [LWC] spoken to speakers of all non-Beba language communities. Residents interviewed at Beba and Bombe indicated that residents use Pidgin daily when in contact with nonmother-tongue speakers. The only exception to this is with the speakers of the neighboring language of Mundum (see next section). In Beba, Pidgin is mixed with the mother tongue. This is viewed as a “bad thing,” and the mother tongue remains vital.

Bombe village residents speak Pidgin to communicate with residents of the neighboring Esimbi, Asaka, and Mesaka languages—all belonging to the Tivoid linguistic subfamily. But they neither share origins with any of these language communities, nor do they consider themselves as being one with these peoples. Yet, these neighboring peoples are the ones with whom they most often intermarry.

Languages of the Ngemba Linguistic Subfamily

By the time Beba-speaking children from Beba village reach 12 years of age, they are reported to understand Mundum and are also understood by Mundum. Beba and Mundum do not share common origins.⁷ Beba village residents who regularly contact Mankon speakers eventually understand Mankon. Although Beba speakers state that they understand both Mankon and Bafut, yet they must use Pidgin in order to communicate with speakers of either language since neither Bafut nor Mankon speakers understand Beba, although there are some Bafut speakers who do. Nevertheless, RA-RTT results suggest that Beba villagers probably lack the necessary understanding of either language to be able to use one or the other as a standard for written or oral communications. Group testing yielded the lowest level of comprehension (level 1) of both texts. (See appendix 2 for details.) General results were interpreted/evaluated according to the following categories:

Level 1: No comprehension. The group is unable to respond correctly to general questions about the story.

Level 2: Partial comprehension. Retelling of the different sections is done but people invent or add to the story. But if probed for details, they answer incorrectly.

⁶ Sadembouo and Hasselbring concluded in their 1991 study that all Ngemba-language communities might be served by either the Bafut or Mankon written standards.

⁷ See Mundum report by Brye, Brye, and Swiri 2002.

Level 3: Good comprehension. The story is retold accurately and the people are able to supply details.

Beba speakers demonstrated a low comprehension of the recorded texts. After administering the RA in Bombe and considering the results of the RA-RTT results in Beba, we chose not to carry it out in Bombe which is farther away from the Mankon and Bafut areas than Beba.

English is not spoken daily. But it is used in Bombe only by the educated and in Beba village just by those children who attend school.

3.4 Language Vitality and Viability

The mother tongue is vital in both villages.

3.4.1 Language Use at Home and with Friends

At Beba, the mother tongue is the primary language used with friends and in the home. In Bombe, Pidgin also may be used occasionally but more frequently than in Beba for speaking with non-Beba friends (perhaps due to a greater mix of the population there?).

3.4.2 Language Use for Work

For both villages the mother tongue is the only language used at work in the fields and on the farms.

3.4.3 Language Use at Markets

Village residents from both Beba and Bombe villages speak Beba and Pidgin English at local markets e.g., at Mbamba. But Beba villagers use only Pidgin at the large market at Oshie, the major village within the Ngishe-language region.

3.4.4 Language Use at the Dispensary

Residents of Bombe and Beba use Pidgin when at the dispensary. (Beba's dispensary is called the Mbekuyam Health Center.)

3.4.5 Language Use at School

English is the language used for classroom instruction.

In Beba, a teacher at the Catholic School [Mbekunyam] (whose mother tongue is Bafut but who was born in Beba, left, and returned five years ago) said that most children from the village attend school and that Beba speakers represent the largest language group enrolled. He supplied the following enrollment figures for the primary school: Class 1: 30, Class 2: 36, Class 3: 41, Class 4: 25, Class 5: 20, Class 6: 25, Class 7: 20, for a total of 197. These students usually trek only about a kilometer to reach school. As a general rule, few children can afford to study at the secondary level. English is used at school, but the mother tongue of Beba is also used. Beba is heard during the recess/break times. At the Beba school, many Beba-speaking children come into contact with fellow students who are Bafut speaking.

In Bombe, we interviewed the Headmaster (PTA teacher) of the Government Primary School. He was born in Bombe village and has been a teacher at the school for the past twelve years. He states that most children—about 350 students in total—attend the primary school where classes are offered up to level 7. Most students are Beba speakers from Bombe village, and most Beba children from the village attend. Speakers of Esimbi and Mesaka (Bagundu Quarter) also attend the Bombe school. English is used in class, Pidgin is used in level 1 and 2 classes

when children misunderstand something and therefore require clarification. The Headmaster avoids resorting to the mother tongue during class. During the recess/break periods children can be heard speaking Beba and, if speaking with non-Beba children, then also Pidgin English. It is his opinion that the two national languages should be given precedence over mother tongue use in the school, but that it may be helpful to introduce the mother tongue as a language of instruction. He would be willing to assist in teaching it.

3.4.6 Language Use at Church Meetings

At Beba, individual interviews were carried out with Beba-speaking church leaders, as well as with a school official of the Catholic Primary School of Mbekunyam. Reportedly, in the village of Beba there are only two Christian denominations: Roman Catholic (established in 1938 and with a population of 250) and Presbyterian (established in 1934 with a population of 190) There are nine Catholic groups and six Presbyterian groups. Both groups use English and Beba for singing. The sermon is presented in Pidgin English, and it is sometimes translated into Beba. The mother tongue is the language used for making announcements at meetings in which English and Pidgin English are used. For youth meeting and study groups, the mother tongue is used. There is reportedly an interest in reading and writing in the mother tongue, and its use is encouraged in meetings.

In Bombe, interviews took place with three mother tongue speakers. One reported that there are three denominations in the area, and church attendees of all three groups also practice traditional religion. For all groups, literature is read in English and then translated into the mother tongue of Beba. Congregational announcements occur in either Pidgin English or the mother tongue. For all groups, there is a mix of the mother tongue, Pidgin, and English (depending on who is present) for studies and youth meetings; but the mother tongue is used the most. Whenever outsiders are present, Pidgin English is used. In all respects, mother tongue use is encouraged and practiced by church leaders of the denominations represented in Bombe village. All three church leaders indicated church members are interested in reading and writing and in obtaining religious materials in the mother tongue. They believe that the members of the various denominations would be willing to work together on a translation project if one were to be started.

3.5 Attitudes

3.5.1 Mother Tongue

In Beba and Bombe villages, no language is used more than the mother tongue and it is preferred to any other language.

3.5.2 Standardization Efforts

A Bombe village resident and retired teacher had once attempted to create a calendar. But this project was discontinued for lack of funds.

In Beba village a businessman wanted to develop the language. But no one knows what became of his intentions. Reportedly, a teacher at the GBAS in Bamenda is also interested in doing the same. The present headmaster (a mother-tongue Beba speaker) of Beba village is willing to be part of establishing an alphabet and to help with literacy.

Language Development Committee Potential

Beba and Bombe village representatives expressed their acceptance of the idea to develop the language. Leaders of the local schools appeared the most motivated to see such an effort related to their field of education.

At Bombe, village leaders presented us with a letter that included potential candidates for participation on a language development committee.

3.5.3 Migration and Intermarriage

Other than mother-tongue speakers, Beba residents marry primarily Mundum speakers. Speakers of Ibo (from Nigeria), Hausa, Meta', and Mundum come to carry on business. But they learn Beba if they decide to stay.

Many from Mesaka, Asako, and Esimbi come to Bombe to trade or to attend school. There was no mention of interaction with those of either Bafut or Mankon language communities. Marriage to the speakers of the neighboring languages of Mesaka and Asako is common.

3.6 Language Development Potential: Socio-Economic Factors (Watters 1990)

John Watters (1990:6.7.1) in his article "Three Socio-economic Factors Affecting the Nature and Development of Language Programs" states the following as being important for predicting the success of language development:

- Homogeneity of the linguistic community (social cohesion)
- Openness of the community to change and to better living conditions
- Presence of the local level of middle-aged leadership

In this section, we consider these factors based on information gathered during the group interviews.

In Beba, the Beba Development and Cultural Association (BEDACA) is responsible for the production of palm oil and for construction. In Bombe, a development committee—a men's society—maintains bridges, procures tools, and raises pigs.

3.6.1 Social Cohesion

Regular interaction between residents of Beba and Bombe, despite the twelve-hour trek, facilitates the continuation of Beba remaining a single speech variety.

3.6.2 Attitudes/Preferences toward Language Development

For each village, the languages that are preferred for reading and writing are the mother tongue or one of the two national languages. English, which is the language of their province, is preferred above French.

In Beba, the order of preference was: (1) English, (2) French, and then (3) Beba (in order to pass it along to their children, promote the language, and promote the fondom).

In Bombe, the order was: (1) Beba with the reference location being Mualah Quarter where the chief resides, (2) English, and then (3) French.

3.6.3 Village-Based Leadership

Beba: leaders live in the village and range in age from 28 to 80 years. Leadership remains in the family as it is passed from one generation to the next. Of the men we met at Beba village, one seemed to be a resource person possessing leadership potential for assisting in the development of the mother tongue.

In Bombe, each of the five quarter heads resides in the village. Their average age is 60–70 years. There is much leadership potential for assisting in the development of their mother tongue among these men.

4.0 SIL/CABTAL/NACALCO ACTIVITIES AND PLANS

None of these organizations plans to work in the Beba language community.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

Lexicostatistically, Beba and Bufe (Bafut) wordlists share a 76 percent similarity based on apparent cognicity. There is negligible variation (94 percent similarity) between the wordlists of the villages of Bombe and Beba. The Beba speech variety has no dialects.

In Bombe and Beba, the mother tongue is used in the home, with friends, and when speaking with others working in the fields and on the farms. Beba appears to be vital, despite the regular interaction of Tivoid-language speakers with Bombe residents and also the exposure to Bafut that children from Beba village have when attending school. There appears to be no language shift away from the mother tongue.

Group interviews in Beba and Bombe reveal an interest in learning to read and write either the mother tongue or one of the two national languages (English preferred over French, since the Beba speech community resides in an anglophone province).

Ranked by self-reported comprehension, Mundum is understood best and then followed by Mankon and then Bafut. In Beba, which is by far the larger of the two Beba-speaking villages, there is a reported understanding of Mundum by the age of 12. Other than mother-tongue speakers, Beba village residents most often marry those of the Mundum language community. But Mundum does not rank among the three languages Beba speakers prefer to learn to read and write. Exposure to the Bafut language occurs especially when Beba village children attend school, but there is no indication of language shift toward Bafut. The group interview at Beba village revealed there to be understanding of both Mankon and Bafut, yet speakers of neither of these languages understand Beba; so communication occurs through Pidgin English. Pidgin is used daily in Beba village. (Reportedly, some Bafut speakers understand Beba.) RA-RTT results indicate that Beba villagers probably lack the necessary understanding of either Mankon or Bafut to be able to use either language as a standard for writing or oral communications. As was true regarding Mundum, neither Bafut nor Mankon was mentioned as a language worth learning to read and write. The relatively low results on the RA-RTT would hint that either the mother tongue or the two national languages are literacy options by both Beba villages.

Dr. Mfonyam's recommendation that Beba not be considered a dialect of Bafut is credible. As a mother-tongue speaker of Bafut, and with his linguistic background and long term experience in the Bafut language, his suggestion alone could be accepted and acted on. But what should be Beba's reclassification—from being a Bafut dialect to what?

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Dr. Joseph Mfonyam is willing to help develop Beba as a separate language.

7.0 MODIFICATIONS TO ALCAM

- Not a dialect of Bafut [912]
- Enter as its own language assigned its own ALCAM number.

APPENDIX 1: ALCAM List

- L1. Language name: Beba
 Interviewee: Patrick A.
 Age: 18
 Native village: Beba
 Father's group:
 Mother's group:
 Level of education: Class 7
 Location: unknown
 Date: unknown (probably late 1970s), list verified on February 15, 2001
 Researcher: Jean-Paul Warnier, University of Pennsylvania
- L2 Language name: Beba
 Interviewees: Mafisa A./ Daniel P./John P.
 Age: various ages
 Native village: Bombe
 Father's group:
 Mother's group:
 Level of education: various
 Location: Beba village
 Date/Date: May 25, 2001
 Researcher: Pius Akumbu, Roseta Swiri, Heidi Anderson, Susanne Kruger
- L3 Language name: Bafut (Bufe dialect, the main dialect of Bafut)
 Linguist: Joseph Mfonyam, SIL (Native speaker of the language)
 Location: Bafut (Mezam Division)
 Date: April 17, 1989
 Comments: 1) High tone is not marked
 2) double vowel signifies length

ALCAM Wordlist	Beba Village [912]	Bombe Village [912]	Bafut Village [912]
1. bouche / mouth	̀ntsɔ	̀ntsó	̀ntsù
2. oeil / eye	nèlyé	nèljé	nìlí'í
3.tête / head	àtó	àtó	àtù
4. cheveux chevelure / hair (on head)	nùtó	nù	nnóŋ
5. dent / tooth	nèsò	nèsó	nìsón
6. langue / tongue	àlé	àlé	àlèè
7. nez / nose	nèlwí	nèlwí	nìlw'í
8. oreille / ear	àtònè	àtoné	àtoŋnə
9. cou / neck	àtùne	àmmé	̀ŋtón
10. sein / breast	níbàrè	nèbá	nìblí
11. bras / main arm / hand	̀àbwó , níkw'ɛ	nèkwé	̀àbó
12. ongle / nail (of hand)	̀àŋè bwó	̀àŋyí	̀àŋĩ
13. pied / foot	akRó	̀àkrú	̀àkorè
14. fesse / buttock	misa	mèsá	misa'a
15. ventre / belly	nèbwò	nàbòb	ato'ò
16. nombril / navel	nítò	nìtò	nìtón
17. boyaux / intestines intestines / insides	mètyó	mètyó	mítò

18. sang / blood	àlé	àlé	àlòè
19. urine / urine	mìdzè	mèdzè	mìdzèè
20. os / bone	ákwè	ákwè	ákwèè
21. peau / skin	ḡgó	ḡgò	ḡgùù
22. aile / wing	nèbyà	nèbjà	nìbà
23. plume / feather	nèflò	nèflò	nìfùrè
24. corne / horn	ḡdó	ḡdó	ḡdóḡè
25. queue / tail	ḡkóé	ḡkèrè	ḡkùù
26. être humain / human being	ḡè	ḡè	ḡù
27. homme (mâle) / man (male)	m̀bánè	m̀bánè	ḡùmbaḡnè
28. femme / woman	m̀ḡḡyè	m̀ḡḡzè	m̀ḡḡyè
29. mari / husband	ḡdó [p]	ḡdóp	ḡdòò
30. enfant / child	m̀óḡkóé	m̀mó	m̀ù
31. nom / name	kwo [p]	b̀òp/ ßwòp	ìk̀ùm
32. ciel / sky	àblò	ablò	àburè
33. nuit / night	thú , t̀ù	ìt̀ù	ìtugè
34. lune / moon	m̀ḡḡró	m̀ḡḡó	s̀ḡḡ
35. soleil / sun	nènòb	nènòb	nìnòò
36. vent / wind	ḡfwóék	ḡfók	afisè
37. nuage / cloud	m̀bà	m̀bà	m̀bà'à
38. rosée / dew	ḡḡyè , àzùrè	ḡḡé	àmèḡḡè
39. pluie / rain	m̀büé	m̀boé	m̀bḡḡ
40. terre / ground	enḡyè	nḡḡé	nsyè
41. sable / sand	wàzòḡḡyè	wàzòḡḡjé	àwḡḡ
42. chemin / path	m̀éèndzè [road]	m̀éèndzè	m̀ḡndzì
43. eau / water	ḡkyì	ḡkjì	ḡkì
44. cours d'eau / stream (river)	ḡkyì	ḡkjìawè	ḡkì
45. maison / house	ndyḡ	ḡdjá	ḡdḡ
46. feu / fire	m̀ò'ó	m̀ò	m̀ò'ò
47. bois à brûler / firewood	fìkwì	fèkwé	ḡkweè
48. fumée / smoke	f̀òlì	fòlì	f̀fì
49. cendre / ash	àbù	àbù	àbù
50. couteau / knife	m̀ḡḡwè	m̀ḡḡwé	nwi
51. corde / rope	ḡkRè	ḡkRè	ḡkèrè
52. lance, sagaie / spear	nèkò	nèkò	ǹìkòḡ
53. guerre (combat) / war (fight)	ntḡò	ḡtḡò	ḡtsò
54. viande / meat	ndzyà	ḡdzà	m̀bà
55. chien / dog	m̀bó , m̀wbo	m̀bó	m̀bù
56. éléphant/elephant	ḡsé	ḡsér	ḡsèè
57. chèvre / goat	m̀bì	m̀bì	m̀bì
58. oiseau / bird	m̀ḡḡì	m̀ḡḡì	s̀ḡḡ
59. tortue / tortoise	tḡimako	tḡimánkò	kwimḡḡkò'ó
60. serpent / snake	ḡó	ḡó	nò
61. poisson / fish	f̀òbwè	f̀òbwè	f̀òbwè

105. enfler / swell	[m]fɔ̃y	fɔ̃ʔ	kwo'ɔ
106. engendrer / give birth	[n]dʒüé	ndʒùè	dʒwi
107. mourir / die	kú , kvú	βú	kwo
108. tuer / kill	ʒùtè	ʒùtè	zwitə
109. pousser / push	dé	dé	tii
110. tirer / pull	ʃúú	ʃùù	swuŋə
111. chanter / sing	zə'	zə	yəə
112. jouer (un jeu) / play (a game)	tsé'	tsè	dorə
113. avoir peur / be afraid	Ró	Ró	bɔ'ɔ
114. vouloir / to want	ló	lò	lɔ'ɔ
115. dire / to say	là	bwɔné	swuŋə
116. voir / to see	[ŋ]zé	zéʔ	yə
117. montrer / show	ndɛʔɛ	dèɛʔ	dĩ'i
118. entendre / hear	zó	zóʔ	yu'u
119. savoir, connaître / to know	yĩ	yí	zi
120. compter / count	tá	táʔ	sɛŋə

APPENDIX 2: MANKON and BAFUT RTT TEXTS AND COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

MANKON (northern dialect) RTT TEXT By Roseta SWIRI (elicited January 2001)

Yesterday, I had to go home. I packed my luggage...(marantz mtr 1.5),

QUESTION 1: When did she have to go home?

ANSWER 1: yesterday

...and I went to the bus stop. (marantz mtr 2.0)

QUESTION 2: Where did she go?

ANSWER 2: bus stop

The friends I had to travel with had already left (marantz mtr 4.5)

QUESTION 3: Who had already left?

ANSWER 3: friends

After paying the transport, I entered the bus. (marantz mtr.5.5)

QUESTION 4: What did she do?

ANSWER 4: paid the transport

I didn't know with whom I would be conversing (talking with). Somewhere when on the road, the person sitting beside me started conversing. (marantz mtr 6.5/7.0)

QUESTION 5: What did the man next to her start doing?

ANSWER 5: conversing.

He was angry about why people outside of Cameroon come [to Cameroon] but don't bear Cameroonian names. (12.0)

QUESTION 6: Why was the man angry?

ANSWER 6: (His frustration that] People outside of Cameroon come but don't bear/adopt Cameroonian names.

But we Cameroonians bear their names without knowing what they mean. (marantz mtr 14.0)

QUESTION 7: Cameroonians bear/adopt their names without knowing what?

ANSWER 7: the meaning(s) of the name(s).

He felt that Cameroonians should bear only their own names. (marantz mtr 17.0) Somewhere on/along the road, the bus had a flat tire (marantz mtr 18.5). It took us some time to replace the tire. (marantz mtr 20.0)

QUESTION 8: Where exactly did the bus have a flat tire?

ANSWER 8: on/along the road

When we arrived where we could buy something to eat, I didn't buy anything to eat but bought something to drink. (marantz mtr 23.5)

QUESTION 9: What did she buy?

ANSWER 9: something to drink

Somewhere on the way, the person sitting beside me left the bus on his way to school where he wants to achieve a higher level of study. (marantz mtr 28.0)

QUESTION 10: What did the person who left the bus want to achieve?

ANSWER 10: a higher level of study.

We continued the journey until we reached our destination/home. (marantz mtr 30.0)

QUESTION 11: When did the journey end?

ANSWER 11: upon reaching their destination/home.

Upon arriving, we continued with what we came to do. (marantz mtr 31.5)

BAFUT TEXT (est. date: November 5, 1990)

It is about two years since this happened, in the month of dry season, two months after Christmas. My wife, my child, and I went towards Mbunti (Wum) to prepare a farm.

QUESTION 1: Why did he go to Mbunti?

ANSWER 1: to prepare a farm

On our way, we had a tire puncture. When the puncture happened, I got someone to go and have it repaired. (We started off going again) and we had a tire puncture again. I didn't know what to do. I asked my wife to go ahead and I would stay to fix the tire. We took off the tire (removed the leg of the moto) and carried it to a tire repairer.

QUESTION 2: Who removed the leg of the moto?

ANSWER 2: the narrator

He (the tire repairer) said he knew how to drive.

QUESTION 3: What did the man who fixed the moto leg say?

ANSWER 3: that he knew how to drive

He took the tire that he had earlier repaired and went (to where the car was) to put it on. He put the tire on and asked the boy to get into the car with him, but the boy refused. He said he would stay there and wait for his father to come and take him.

QUESTION 4: Where did the child say he would stand and wait for his father?

ANSWER 4: where the tire puncture took place

The repairer entered the car and since he did not know how to drive, he entered the car and was driving very/too fast.

QUESTION 5: How did he drive?

ANSWER 5: very/too fast

And when he was about to go around a bend, he went off the road and fell into a ditch. When he fell into the ditch, he came out and he had bruises/scratches on his face.

QUESTION 6: Where was he scratched?

ANSWER 6: on his face

One side of the car was shattered. The window glasses (windshield) was shattered and the eyes of the moto (= lights) were also shattered.

QUESTION 7: What happened to the eyes of the moto?

ANSWER 7: they were shattered

He left the car in the ditch and ran and came to me. He said to me, "Father, the brakes of the car do not hold." So I asked, "Where is the car?" He said, "It is lying by the gutter there." I asked him, "How many people should I bring to help push the car (out of the ditch)? He said, "About 3 people."

QUESTION 8: How many people did he say were needed to push the car?

ANSWER 8: about 3

I took (three) people and we went to get it. We went for a long distance and stood. And when I stood and I asked, "Where is the car?" He said, "It is there very far away in a ditch. If you lift up your head, you will see that the ditch is very deep."

QUESTION 9: How will he be able to see the car?

ANSWER 9: by lifting up his head

I asked, "You said I should bring 3 people to bring a car out from such a ditch?!" He stood looking at me, and the people sighed. And they went and looked for many people while I went to look for the chief of the area.

QUESTION 10: What did the people do?

ANSWER 10: signed, or went and looked for many people

I (or the chief?) sent many people to clear a path toward the pit.

QUESTION 11: What did the people whom the chief called come and do?

ANSWER 11: cleared a path towards the pit

I looked for a bigger truck to pull out the car. I looked for a rope and tied it to the car and pulled it.

QUESTION 12: What did they use to come and pull the car out?

ANSWER 12: a rope

When it was pulled out, we tried it. I went into the car and saw that it was still working. I went in and I was driving without a windshield. A lot of dust came in and covered me all over. My wife and my child took another car, a truck carrying sand. I brought up the car and repaired it.

APPENDIX 3: BEBA VILLAGE GROUP RTT RESULTS (MANKON and BAFUT TEXTS)

MANKON (northern dialect) Group RTT In Beba Village (February 15, 2001)

Faces (how many were in the audience?) registered little comprehension. One opinion expressed in the group was that the Mankon account was of the same language spoken in the village of Mundum I. Only one man said he thought the text was in the Mankon language. The young ones in the group understood nothing.

Question 1: Which day did the person begin to travel?

Response 1: One man who has traveled to Mankon had a general idea, but no others did.

Response 1: One of the ladies from Mundum I who had married in Beba answered this question correctly.

Question 2: What happened when she went to the bus stop?

Response 2: Half correct (one lady) – paid transport fare.

Question 3: What did the person ask? What was the topic of the conversation?

Response 3: zero. (no one understood).

Question 4: Why was he angry?

Response 4: Zero. (No understanding)

This marked the conclusion of the group RTT session. Roseta Swiri, a Mankon speaker, spoke with the participants and concluded there was inadequate comprehension of Mankon.

Bafut Group RTT in Beba Village (February 15, 2001)

Faces registered almost no comprehension. They recognized the text as being in the Bafut language. Although the volume of our recorder was low, we compensated for this by holding it closely to help them. We played the recorded Bafut text through once, then repeated it a second time including the pauses and questions. Roseta Swiri interpreted/translated the questions into Pidgin to ensure understanding.

Response 1: Respondents knew where he was going, but didn't answer the question.

Response 2: Incorrect.

Response 3: Incorrect.

Response 4: One lady got it correct

Response 5: Incorrect.

Response 6: Incorrect.

Response 7: Incorrect

Response 8: Stopped/quit here

**APPENDIX 4: LINGUISTIC MAP of Beba and Nearby Languages
(Dieu and Renaud 1983: 401)**



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