

MARKET PLACE OF THE PULPIT: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF INTER-DENOMINATIONAL MUDSLINGING AMONG PREACHERS IN CAMEROON

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Abstract

This article examines how language sustains competition in Cameroon's deregulated religious marketplace. Drawing on 15 years of personal participant observation and 30 months of intentional ethnography in Yaoundé, Douala, Bamenda and Buea, with 20 recorded sermons and 45 interviews, it shows that inter-denominational rivalry has shifted from overt mudslinging to covert intimidation. While pejorative labels such as “business centre”, “les hiers hiers”, les pietines, pietines, holier than thou churches, lovy lovy churches and “Jesus Kwem” still circulate, pastors increasingly rely on excessive glossolalia as a deniable market strategy. Timed observations reveal Pentecostal services average 18 minutes of uninterpreted tongues per 90-minute service, compared to zero in mainline services. Framed through Mark 16:17, Acts 2:4 and Romans 8:26, this sonic excess functions as symbolic capital that makes silence appear as unbelief without a single direct insult being uttered, prompting youth to question prior faith.

Keywords:

Cameroon, religious marketplace, mudslinging, glossolalia, symbolic capital, Critical Discourse Analysis.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article examine la manière dont le langage entretient la concurrence dans le marché religieux libéralisé du Cameroun. S'appuyant sur quinze années d'observation participante personnelle et trente mois d'enquête ethnographique approfondie menée à Yaoundé, Douala, Bamenda et Buea, ainsi que sur vingt sermons enregistrés et quarante-cinq entretiens, l'étude révèle que les rivalités interconfessionnelles sont progressivement passées du dénigrement explicite à des formes d'intimidation indirecte. Bien que des expressions péjoratives telles que « centres d'affaires », « les hiers hiers », « les piétines-piétines », « les Églises qui se croient plus saintes que les autres », « les Églises lovy lovy » et « Jesus Kwem » continuent de circuler, les pasteurs recourent de plus en plus à une glossolalie excessive comme stratégie concurrentielle difficilement contestable. Les observations chronométrées révèlent que les cultes pentecôtistes comportent en moyenne dix-huit minutes de parler en langues sans interprétation pour



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une célébration de quatre-vingt-dix minutes, contre aucune minute dans les cultes des Églises historiques. Justifiée par des références bibliques telles que Marc 16:17, Actes 2:4 et Romains 8:26, cette intensification sonore fonctionne comme un capital symbolique qui tend à présenter le silence comme une manifestation d'incrédulité, sans qu'aucune insulte directe ne soit prononcée. Cette pratique conduit certains jeunes à remettre en question leurs convictions religieuses antérieures.

Mots-clés : Cameroun, marché religieux, dénigrement interconfessionnel, glossolalie, capital symbolique, analyse critique du discours.

Introduction

The religious landscape of Cameroon has undergone a fundamental restructuring since 1990. The Law on Freedom of Association [Law No. 90/053] liberalized the creation of religious associations, ending the oligopoly long held by historic mission churches - the Roman Catholic Church, Presbyterian Church in Cameroon [PCC], Cameroon Baptist Convention [CBC], and Evangelical Church of Cameroon [EEC] [Akoko, 2007; Konings, 2003]. The Ministry of Territorial Administration [MINAT] now lists 55 authorized denominations in Cameroon since January 23, 2026, date of the presidential decree signed by President Paul Biya, authorizing additional 8 denominations to the 47 existing approved and recognized ones with hundreds more operating without authorization.

This deregulation coincided with economic crisis. Structural Adjustment Programs in the late 1980s cut public sector salaries by 60-70% and shrank formal employment. Pastorship became a viable form of self-employment, what Lauterbach calls religious entrepreneurship. Today, in urban quarters such as Obili and Biyem-Assi in Yaoundé, Bonaberi in Douala, Up Station in Bamenda, and Molyko in Buea, 5 to 10 churches operate within a one-kilometer radius. All target the same demographic: youth, internal migrants, the unemployed, the desperate and workers in precarious employment. Cameroon has a median age of 18.7 years; over 60% of the population is under 25.

This concentration creates what Stark and Finke term a religious marketplace. Churches behave as firms competing for members and resources, pastors as entrepreneurs seeking to maximize commitment, and congregants as clients seeking spiritual rewards. In such a market, differentiation is essential. Unlike consumer goods, however, churches sell intangible goods - salvation, healing, and breakthrough - whose quality cannot be verified before consumption. Language from the pulpit therefore becomes the primary site of brand differentiation, member retention, and competitor delegitimization.

Two discursive mechanisms dominate this competition. The first is overt inter-denominational mudslinging: the use of pejorative labels, negative other-presentation, and moral suspicion directed at rival churches [Deacon, 2015; Meyer, 2004]. The second, more recent and more effective, is covert glossolalic intimidation: the strategic use of prolonged speaking in tongues to create spiritual hierarchy. When a service contains 18 minutes of uninterpreted tongues while the church across the street contains none, the silence itself is reframed as absence of power. The shift from overt to covert is driven by regulation. MINAT Article 30 allows closure of associations that disturb public order.

Direct insults such as “business centre” or “feyman church” that lead to complaints or physical altercations can trigger administrative action. Glossolalia, by contrast, is legally untouchable because it is prayer. It achieves a similar market effect - making the rival appear powerless or as unbeliever - without the legal risk of direct insult.

Scripture functions as symbolic capital in this struggle. Verses are lifted from canonical context and recontextualized to sanctify market loyalty. Mark 16:17 - “they shall speak with new tongues” - is recontextualized as a test of belief: if signs follow believers, and the sign is tongues, then a place without tongues lacks believers. Acts 2:4 - “all were filled and began to speak” - is recontextualized as normative: all should speak. Romans 8:26 - “groanings which cannot be uttered” - is recontextualized as deep intercession, making non-glossolalic prayer appear shallow. On the other side, 1 Corinthians 14:40 - “let all things be done decently and in order” - and 1 Corinthians 12:30 - “do all speak with tongues?” - are recontextualized to defend order and to reassure non-speakers. [Bourdieu, 1991]

This article contributes in four ways. First, it provides the first systematic inventory of mudslinging lexicon in Cameroon, including Camfranglais and Pidgin forms such as *_les hiers hiers*, *les pietines pietines_* and *_Jesus Kwem_*. Second, it documents a previously unanalyzed phenomenon: excessive glossolalia as intimidation rather than mere charismatic expression. Third, it integrates Critical Discourse Analysis [Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1998] and economics of religion to show how sacred sound functions as market regulation where formal regulation is weak. [Kouega, 2018]. The fourth is the practical application of the findings of this research, in order to avoid such heresy in mudslinging and glossolalia within the Christian faith.

The article proceeds in five sections. Section 1 details methodology. Section 2 analyzes the four families of pejorative labels. Section 3 analyzes the shift to glossolalic intimidation. Section 4 discusses market functions and implications for religious coexistence. Section 5 is conclusion and recommendations.

The Historical Trajectory of Mainline and Pentecostal Churches in Cameroon: From 1841 to the ‘Jesus Kwem’ Era

The religious landscape of Cameroon is a product of two distinct waves of Christian evangelization, separated by over a century. The first wave, beginning in 1841, established what are today called the mainline churches. The second wave, beginning around 1970, introduced Pentecostalism, a movement often pejoratively called *_les hiers hiers_* – the newcomers of yesterday – in contrast to the churches that have existed since the 19th century.

The Mainline Foundations: The Baptist Pioneers of 1841

Christianity in Cameroon did not begin with colonialism, but with abolitionist missionaries. The first sustained Protestant mission was planted on the coast of present-day Southwest Region in 1841.

The key figures were Joseph Merrick, Alexander Fuller, and Alfred Saker. Joseph Merrick, a Jamaican of African descent from the Baptist Missionary Society in London, was the first

to arrive in 1841 in Bimbia. He was joined in 1843 by Alfred Saker, an English missionary engineer and linguist. Their mission, the Cameroon Baptist Mission (CBM), was strategic. They established stations in Bimbia, Douala, and later Victoria [now Limbe] after Saker negotiated land from the King of Bimbia in 1858 to resettle freed slaves. Saker's greatest legacy was linguistic; he translated the Bible into Duala language in 1872 and built the first printing press, schools, and churches.

This Baptist work is considered the mother of mainline Protestantism in Cameroon. With time, various branches of the Baptist work gained autonomy due to colonial transitions [from British to German in 1884, then to French and British mandates after 1916] and internal mission policies.

The most significant autonomy came in 1954. The churches that were under the North American Baptist Mission [which had taken over from the London Baptist Missionary Society] moved from being a mission field – Cameroon Baptist Mission (CBM) – to an autonomous national church: the *Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC)* in 1954. The CBC became the first indigenous-led Baptist denomination, with its headquarters in Bamenda.

Alongside the Baptists, other mainline churches were planted before 1900:

- a) The Basel Mission [1845, later Presbyterian]: Started by Joseph Merrick's colleagues, it worked among the Bakweri and later moved into the Grassfields, becoming the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon [PCC], which gained autonomy in 1957.
- b) The Catholic Church: The Pallottine Fathers arrived in 1890 under German colonial rule, establishing Catholicism as the largest denomination today.
- c) The Lutheran and other Reformed Missions: Arrived through German and later American missionary societies.[1890]

The defining characteristic of these mainline churches is historical depth, institutional structure, liturgical order, and deep integration into Cameroon's educational and health systems since 1841. They are perceived as the established, historical churches.

The Pentecostal Break: The 1970s Wave

If 1841 marks the genesis of mainline Christianity, around 1970 marks the second Pentecostal wave in Cameroon, although its roots go back to the 1930s Apostolic Church mission in Kumba. The modern Pentecostal movement in Cameroon grew from three sources:

- a) Returnee Diaspora: Cameroonians who encountered Pentecostalism in Nigeria and Europe during the oil boom of the 1970s brought it back, especially to the Southwest and Northwest Regions.
- b) American and Nigerian Missionaries: The Full Gospel Mission [from the USA], The Apostolic Church, Assemblies of God, Deeper Life, and later Winners' Chapel entered Cameroon between 1970 and 1990.
- c) Indigenous Charismatic Breakaways: Young Cameroonian evangelists, often dissatisfied with what they perceived as the spiritual coldness and formalism of mainline churches, started independent ministries in halls and homes.

Pentecostalism introduced a different theology and practice: emphasis on the immediate experience of the Holy Spirit, baptism in the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues, divine healing, prophecy, deliverance from demons, and prosperity gospel. This contrast created a sociological tension, which produced two popular cultural labels in Cameroonian Christianity. Thus, two theologies of power emerged: Mainline legitimacy is rooted in history, education, and institution [since 1841, CBM to CBC 1954, for instance]. Pentecostal legitimacy is rooted in experiential power, immediate deliverance, and the visible "Jesus Kwem" phenomenon [since 1970].

Today, the history of Christianity in Cameroon cannot be told without both streams. The mainline churches [CBC][PCC] [Roman Catholic][provided the foundation: they translated the Bible into local languages, created the first Western schools and hospitals, and gave birth to an autonomous Cameroonian church as early as 1954 when CBC moved from CBM mission to national convention.

The Pentecostal churches, arriving as *les hiers hiers* around 1970, provided the revitalization: they introduced mass evangelism through radio, music, and deliverance ministries, urban youth appeal, and a theology that directly addresses African cosmologies of witchcraft, ancestral curses, and spiritual attack through the dramatic Jesus Kwem deliverance. The current religious dynamics in Bamenda, Douala, and Yaoundé are therefore not just a theological debate, but a historical negotiation between the Christianity of 1841 and the Christianity of 1970 – between establishment and experience, between institution and manifestation.

Pentecostal Proliferation in Africa and Cameroon - History and Explanations

The growth of Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity (commonly known as Born again churches) is widely documented as the most significant religious shift in twentieth-century Africa. Anderson 2014 estimates over 200 million African Pentecostals. Kalu 2008 traces Pentecostalism's third wave in Africa from 1970s onward, after earlier waves of mission churches and African Independent Churches. Hollenweger 1972 and Cox 1995 early noted Pentecostalism's experiential appeal and orality. Two broad explanations dominate literature.

First, cultural resonance and cosmological fit. Asamoah-Gyadu 2005, Meyer 2004, and Larbi 2001 argue Pentecostalism grows because it addresses African cosmologies of witchcraft, healing, deliverance, and immediate spiritual causality, which mainline churches dismissed most often as superstition or psychologized. Asamoah-Gyadu shows Ghanaian Pentecostals provide prayer that takes witchcraft seriously. Meyer 1998 shows Ewe Christians in Ghana see Pentecostal deliverance as addressing witchcraft. In Cameroon, Akoko 2007 shows Pentecostals in Southwest Region attracted youth by addressing nyongo and ifan witchcraft idioms directly, offering deliverance rather than counseling or ignoring. Rowell and Akoko 2018 show similar in Buea where deliverance addresses marine spirits linked to coastal imaginary and famla, Bamilike idiom for occult wealth through sacrifice. Geschiere 2013 argues witchcraft discourse persists because it explains inequality and accumulation in neoliberal economy. Pentecostal deliverance

takes witchcraft seriously as real enemy to be defeated, not as backward belief and this cultural fit explains demand.

Second, political economy and neoliberal precarity. Bayart 1993 concept of politics of the belly, Konings 2003 analysis of Anglophone crisis and privatization, and Akoko 2007 show 1986 economic crisis and Structural Adjustment Programs cut salaries 60-70 percent, devalued CFA franc by 50 percent in 1994, and reduced state employment from main employer to minimal. Religious entrepreneurship became survival strategy. Lauterbach 2010 documents Pentecostal churches in Cameroon as self-employment for unemployed graduates, with pastors calculating rent for hall, tithes and offerings needed for use. Bayart 1993 shows church provides network for accumulation. Obadare 2018 and Ukah 2008 show Nigerian Pentecostal models operate as franchises with business plans, media arms, branches, and use of anointing oil as product. Ukah shows Redeemed Christian Church of God operates like corporation.

Youth demographics matter. Cameroon median age 18.7, 60 percent under 25, according to UN 2022. Youth born after 2000 have no memory of mainline monopoly. They seek sonic and visual intensity, drums, dance, Camfranglais, that mainline liturgy with organ does not provide. University of Bamenda, Buea and Yaounde students are key clients.

Gap: Literature explains why Pentecostalism grows, cultural resonance and political economy, but not how competition is linguistically accomplished between churches once they coexist in same street. Gifford 2004 notes Ghanaian Pentecostals call mainline dead, but does not analyze lexicon systematically or count. Burgess 2008 notes Nigerian inter-denominational demonization but not discourse analysis. This study fills by counting labels, timing tongues, analyzing scripture recontextualization.

Religious Marketplace, Economics of Religion, Symbolic Capital

Economics of religion provides rational choice model. Iannaccone 1991 proposes strict churches are stronger because strictness screens free riders, those who attend without contributing time and money. Strictness raises cost of membership, increases average giving and commitment. Stark and Finke 2000 propose religious firms competing for members, deregulation increases vitality, monopoly produces lazy clergy, and competition produces energetic clergy. Finke and Stark 2005 apply to America, showing deregulation increased church attendance. In Africa, Lauterbach 2010, Obadare 2018, Ukah 2008 apply to Cameroon and Nigeria, showing churches as firms with accounting.

Critiques: Culturalist scholars argue rational choice reduces religion to economics. Bourdieu 1991 corrects economic view by emphasizing symbolic capital and field. Religious field is struggle for monopoly over legitimate definition of salvation, over who can say what true Christianity is. Different churches possess different capitals: mainline historical capital 100+ years, martyrs, buildings; institutional capital schools, hospitals, universities, authorization papers from MINAT; cultural capital correct French English and theological degrees from seminaries, liturgical knowledge, Latin; social capital networks to state officials, to Nigeria networks, to Diaspora; Pentecostal charismatic capital tongues, prophecy, healing, visions, anointing; youth capital Camfranglais and drums and dance; media capital Facebook followers, TikTok views, YouTube subscribers.

Deacon (2015) shows Pentecostal media in Zambia uses charismatic capital to devalue institutional capital: they say we have power, they have schools but no power. Meyer 2004 shows similar.

Symbolic capital is capital misrecognized as legitimate authority, not as interest. When a pastor quotes Malachi 3:10 bring ye all tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and says storehouse is my church where there is power and tongues, he converts economic interest bring money to me into symbolic capital obedience to God and receiving blessing windows of heaven open. Congregation misrecognizes extraction as blessing.

Symbolic violence is violence misrecognized as natural or holy, exercised with complicity of the dominated. When excessive tongues make non-speaker feel like unbeliever, feeling is misrecognized as Holy Ghost conviction or spiritual hunger, not as social intimidation produced by 7 minutes performance. With dominated complicity, congregant seeks tongues, tithes more, and stays, thinking it is spiritual desire. Scripture as symbolic capital: The ability to rightly divide word from 2 Timothy 2:15 that says ‘...study to shew thyself approved...’ is capital. Quoting Matthew 7:15 ‘beware of false prophets which come in sheep’s clothing but inwardly ravening wolves’ to label rival as wolf is use of scripture as weapon. Quoting Matthew 21:13 my house shall be called house of prayer but ye have made it den of thieves to label rival as business centre is use of scripture to devalue economic capital of rival. Deacon 2015, Meyer 2004.

Inter-denominational Competition, Sheep Stealing, and Boundary Policing

Emic term sheep stealing used by pastors in interviews to describe poaching members. Pastors complain he stole my sheep. Biblical warrant: Jeremiah 23:1 woe be unto pastors that destroy and scatter sheep of my pasture; Ezekiel 34:2 woe be to shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves, should not shepherds feed flocks. Pentecostals use Ezekiel to accuse mainline of feeding themselves with salaries, school fees, while sheep starve spiritually; mainline uses Jeremiah to accuse Pentecostals of scattering sheep with false doctrine and prosperity.

Anthropology of belonging: Geschiere 2013, Nyamnjoh 2005, Nyamnjoh 2002 show church provides new autochthony and belonging for migrants in cities who have left village. Molyko student from Bamenda finds belonging in Pentecostal church with homeboy network, not in village association which demands contributions. Church provides new family. Mudslinging polices boundaries: we are a living church and they are dead creates in-group and out-group identities.

Deacon 2015, Meyer 2004 document diabolization in Zambia and Ghana: rival framed as demonic, marine, and occult. Meyer 1998 shows Ewe Pentecostals call mainline as having little power against witchcraft. Burgess 2008 documents similar in Nigeria where Pentecostals call mainline as cold. In Cameroon, Akoko 2007 notes tension but not systematic analysis of lexicon. Konings 2003 notes PCC pastors complain about Pentecostal stealing youth. Dual membership is common: many Cameroonians attend mainline Sunday morning for respectability and family, and Pentecostal Sunday evening for fire. Pastors use Matthew 6:24 no man can serve two masters and Joshua 24:15 choose

you this day whom ye will serve to force loyalty and reduce dual membership. This is boundary policing. The gap here is that, no systematic Critical Discourse Analysis of sheep stealing discourse in Cameroon, no count of labels, no timing of tongues, no analysis of how scripture recontextualized to police boundaries.

Language, Glossolalia, Discourse, and Cameroon Linguistic Market

Cameroon has 280+ indigenous languages plus English, French, Cameroon Pidgin English, and Camfranglais, urban youth language mixing French, English, Pidgin, with innovation [Kouega 2018, Mforteh 2007, De Féral 2012, Kouega 2007]. Mainline historically used English, French, Mungaka, Bassa, Duala, indexing colonial mission history and respectability. Catholic uses Latin, French and English. PCC uses English and Mungaka. Pentecostals pioneered Pidgin and Camfranglais slogans like God no be man, God go do am, fire dey, indexing immediacy, street credibility, youth.

Glossolalia theology: Mark 16:17 these signs shall follow them that believe, they shall speak with new tongues; Acts 2:4 and they were all filled with Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues as Spirit gave utterance; Romans 8:26 likewise Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; Acts 1:8 ye shall receive power after that Holy Ghost is come upon you; Acts 10:46 they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God; Acts 19:6 Holy Ghost came on them and they spake with tongues and prophesied. These establish Pentecostal doctrine of initial evidence, tongues as initial physical evidence of Spirit baptism.

Regulation of glossolalia: 1 Corinthians 14 provides order and correction: verse 2 he that speaketh in unknown tongue speaketh not unto men but unto God for no man understandeth; verse 4 he that speaketh in unknown tongue edifieth himself; verse 19 yet in church I had rather speak five words with my understanding; verse 22 tongues are for a sign not to them that believe but to unbelievers; verse 23 if therefore whole church be come together and all speak with tongues and there come in those that are unlearned or unbelievers will they not say ye are mad; verse 27 if any man speak in unknown tongue let it be by two or at most three and that by course and let one interpret; verse 30 do all speak with tongues? implied answer no; verse 33 God is not author of confusion but of peace; verse 39 forbid not to speak with tongues; verse 40 let all things be done decently and in order. Both sides selectively cite: Pentecostals cite Acts 2:4, Mark 16:17, Romans 8:26, 1 Corinthians 14:39 forbid not; mainline cite 14:19, 14:23, 14:33, 14:40, 12:30.

Linguistic studies of glossolalia: Samarin 1972 in *Tongues of Men and Angels* shows glossolalia has phonology of speaker's native language but no consistent semantics, no language structure. Goodman 1972 *Speaking in Tongues* shows similar cross-culturally, with rhythmic repetition. In Cameroon, Kouega 2018 notes tongues syllables like rabababa, shibababa, rorororo reflect English and French phonology, not unknown language. This linguistic reality does not affect emic belief that it is heavenly language.

Critical Discourse Analysis: Fairclough 1995 three-dimensional model text, discursive practice, social practice; Fairclough 1998 on intertextuality and recontextualization where other texts inserted and transformed; van Dijk 1998 ideological square emphasize Our good, Their bad, de-emphasize Our bad, their good; Wodak 2016 discourse-historical

approach linking present insults to colonial history and collective memory; Wodak 2009 on politics of fear. Meyer 2004 concept of diabolization, framing rival as demonic.

Fairclough intertextuality is crucial: Biblical citation is re-contextualization where some verses are removed from original historical context and inserted into new competitive field to legitimate self and illegitimate others. Example: Matthew 21:13 my house shall be called house of prayer but ye have made it den of thieves originally referred to temple merchants in Jerusalem during Passover selling animals, recontextualized to rival selling anointing oil at 10,000 FCFA or selling baptism certificate at 2,000 FCFA. Verse authority retained, but referent changed. This is powerful because congregation hears divine condemnation, not pastor opinion.

Similarly, Malachi 3:10 bring ye all tithes into storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house originally addressed Israelites failing to support Levites and temple, recontextualized to mean Tithes becoming loyalty vote.

John 10:10 thief cometh not but for to steal and to kill and to destroy originally false shepherds, recontextualized as rival pastor who steals members, steals star, steals tithe.

Matthew 10:8 freely ye have received freely give and 2 Corinthians 2:17. This is used by mainline preachers to insinuate that they are not as others who corrupt the word of God. They use it to accuse Pentecostals of corrupting the word for money, selling what should be free. This intertextual analysis avoids theological judgment and focuses on discursive function. The gap here is that, no study in Cameroon applies Critical Discourse Analysis to excessive tongues as intimidation, nor measures duration with stopwatch, nor distinguishes verifiable practice from strategic exaggeration and from fake imagination like this study does.

Synthesis and Research Gap

Literatures show proliferation explained by cultural resonance and political economy, market competition explained by rational choice and symbolic capital, sheep stealing tensions documented but not systematically analyzed, linguistic complexity documented, glossolalia theology and regulation documented, but no study brings together to analyze how excessive tongues functions as deniable mudslinging and market mechanism.

This study fills gap by treating sound duration as data, counting labels, distinguishing real verifiable practice from strategic exaggeration and from fake imagination. Real verifiable includes timed 18 minutes tongues, photographed price tags 5,000 FCFA. Strategic exaggeration referring to Pentecostal churches includes the selling of everything including utterances, anointing oil, salt, water, stickers, etc. They have no power at all apart from their business centres (schools and hospitals.) when referring to mainline churches Fake imagination includes invented scenario girl called to front crying, demon shouting I am from PCC, 100 people left after tongues, which we exclude because not observed. Research questions therefore include the following: What lexicon of contempt exists in Cameroon religious marketplace? How does glossolalia function as intimidation without direct insult? How does scripture function as symbolic capital to sanctify loyalty?

How does platform Sunday vs Facebook affect strategy? How to distinguish real, strategic exaggeration, and fake?

Linguistic Market and Youth

Bourdieu linguistic market: Bourdieu opines that different ways of speaking have different values. French and English function high in administrative market and formal liturgy, low in youth market especially Pentecostal youth where they index colonial as old. Pidgin and Camfranglais low in formal market but high in youth religious market because they index street credibility. Slogans: God no be man, God dey for you, fire go burn am. Excessive tongues low in educated administrative market, high in deliverance market where it indexes power. Pastors code-switch: French sermon, tongues prayer, Pidgin shout. Youth demand somatic proof: 12 of 15 youth interviewees said they want to feel heat, falling, shaking as proof of God's presence. Some think that mainline quiet prayer does not provide and that Pentecostal tongues provides somatic proof because they are loud, long, embodied, etc.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK - Critical Discourse Analysis, Religious Marketplace, Symbolic Capital, and Biblical Intertextuality

This section presents four theoretical strands used to analyze inter-denominational mudslinging and glossolalic intimidation in Cameroon. First, Fairclough's three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis links text, production, and social context. Second, van Dijk's ideological square and Wodak's discourse-historical approach analyze othering and historical legitimation. Third, Bourdieu's field theory analyzes scripture and tongues as symbolic capital and symbolic violence. Fourth, Stark and Finke's economics of religion analyzes discourse as market mechanism. Biblical intertextuality is analyzed as recontextualization where verses such as Mark 16:17, Acts 2:4, Romans 8:26, 1 Corinthians 14:19-40, Matthew 7:15, Matthew 21:13, Malachi 3:10, Matthew 10:8, 2 Corinthians 2:17, John 10:10, Jeremiah 23:1, Ezekiel 34:2, Ephesians 4:3, 1 Corinthians 12:30, Ephesians 1:13, Acts 19:2 are lifted from canonical context and inserted into competitive field.

Critical Discourse Analysis - Language as Social Practice

Critical Discourse Analysis is not neutral linguistic description. It assumes language is social practice that both reflects and constitutes power relations. Fairclough distinguishes three dimensions. Text is linguistic forms - vocabulary, grammar, metaphor, biblical quotation. Discursive practice is production, distribution, interpretation - who speaks, on Facebook Live, with what authority, to which audience. Social practice is broader structures - religious market deregulation, MINAT regulation, economic precarity, youth demographics. Analysis must move between these levels dialectically.

Textual Level - Lexicalization, Metaphor, Intertextuality

At textual level, mudslinging operates through lexicalization - choice of words to name rival and self. Van Dijk notes lexical choice is never neutral. Calling rival *_business centre_* versus *_ministry_* is political choice with material consequences. Calling rival *_les hiers_* versus *_mother church_* is political. In Cameroon corpus of 78 labels, we find four lexical families detailed in Section 4: obsolescence labels, hyper-spirituality mockery, economic fraudulence, spiritual danger.

Lexicalization of obsolescence includes French *_les hiers_* meaning those of yesterday, *_dry church, cold church, eglise seche, sleeping church, dead church_*. These lexical choices frame mainline as temporally backward, expired. Lexicalization of hyper-spirituality mockery includes *_Jesus Kwem, Kwem-Kwem, Rabababa church, Shisha church_*. Kwem is onomatopoeic imitation of rapid glossolalia. Rabababa and Shibababa are direct mimesis of glossolalic syllables observed in field, documented by Samarin as typical syllables. Shisha in Pidgin means noise or hot air. These frame Pentecostal as excessive, noisy, lacking order.

Lexicalization of economic fraudulence includes *_business centre, boutique, feyman church, 419 church, offering church, anointing oil shop_*. Feyman is Cameroonian Pidgin for fraudster, from English fey, documented by Kouega. 419 refers to Nigerian criminal code for advance fee fraud. These frame rival as economically motivated. Lexicalization of spiritual danger includes *_occult, marine, famla, witchcraft church, satanic_*. Marine refers to water spirits Mami Wata, Geschiere. Famla is Bamilike idiom for occult wealth through sacrifice, Geschiere. These lexical choices frame rival as spiritually dangerous.

Metaphor analysis is central. Lakoff and Johnson argue metaphor structures thought. In Cameroon, container metaphors dominate: mainline as cemetery, cold house, dry well, ice box; Pentecostal as fire house, power house, storehouse, overflowing cup. Source domain temperature and water, target domain spiritual vitality. Fire versus ice is pervasive. Pentecostal self as fire, mainline as ice. Mainline self as deep river, Pentecostal as noisy gutters. Metaphors organize perception of market. Groaning metaphor from Romans 8:26 is central. Verse says *_Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered_*. In Pentecostal recontextualization, groaning becomes glossolalia, glossolalia becomes deep intercession. Shallow intercession is prayer with understanding; deep intercession is groaning. To make it irrefutable, this metaphor allows pastor to claim that his 5-minute tongues is not performance but the Spirit groaning through him.

Mark 16:17 metaphor of sign is central. Verse says *_these signs shall follow them that believe; they shall speak with new tongues_*. In recontextualization, tongues becomes sign, badge, proof of belief. Sign becomes test. If you do not have a sign, you are not a believer. In so doing, descriptive becomes prescriptive test. Intertextuality is crucial. Fairclough defines intertextuality as presence of other texts within text, how other texts are recontextualized. In preaching, intertextuality is biblical citation, but citation is not neutral exegesis. It is strategic recontextualization where verse is removed from original historical context and inserted into new competitive context to legitimate self and illegitimate other. Wodak calls this historical revision and recontextualization.

For example, Matthew 21:13 _My house shall be called house of prayer; but ye have made it den of thieves originally referred to temple merchants Jerusalem during Passover. In Cameroonian pulpit, it is recontextualized to refer to rival selling anointing oil at 10,000 FCFA or selling baptism certificates at 2,000 FCFA or selling school admission. Verse's divine authority retained, referent changed from Jerusalem temple to rival church across street. Powerful because congregation hears divine condemnation of rival, not pastor opinion.

Similarly, Malachi 3:10 _Bring ye all tithes into storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house_ originally addressed Israelites failing to support Levites and temple. In Cameroon, storehouse recontextualized to mean my church where there is power and tongues and groaning and fire, not dry church where there is only self and head knowledge for example. Tithe becomes loyalty vote to storehouse that overflows with tongues. Economic interest - bring money to me - sanctified as obedience.

John 10:10 _thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy_ originally false shepherds. In Cameroon, thief recontextualized as rival pastor who steals members, steals star, steals tithe. Frames sheep stealing as spiritual theft, not market competition.

Matthew 10:8 _Freely ye have received, freely give_ and 2 Corinthians 2:17 _we are not as many, which corrupt word of God_ used by mainline to accuse Pentecostals of corrupting word for money, selling what should be free, making house of prayer den of thieves from Matthew 21:13. These attempts to devalue Pentecostal charismatic capital by reframing as economic fraud, as fake business centre. We analyze biblical citations not for theological correctness but for discursive function: how they sanctify economic interests, create spiritual threat, produce hierarchy where tongues equals believer.

Discursive Practice - Who Speaks, Platform, Entitlement

Second dimension is production, distribution, interpretation. Who is entitled to speak about rival? In Cameroon, entitlement claimed through different sources. Pentecostal pastor claims charismatic calling - God called me in vision, I have anointing. Mainline pastor claims divine calling and institutional sending. I have training from a recognized seminary. Both claim entitlement but different source of symbolic capital. While others are called and officially trained in authorized seminaries and later called to pastor mainline churches under a centralized body, others auto proclaim charismatic individual divine calling (through revelations, prophecies, visions, impartation, self-conviction, etc.) and move straight to ministry at times under the mentorship of other charismatic preachers or go through unrecognized newly created seminaries under some charismatic churches and create autonomous churches that are not answerable to anyone.

Platform matters greatly for mudslinging. Sunday pulpit 10am is licensed space - pastor has formal authority inside building but also more surveillance by elders and MINAT informants. Facebook Live 10pm, TikTok, WhatsApp voice notes are less licensed - pastor can attack rival more directly because state monitors physical spaces more than digital, and because digital audience is self-selected. Meyer shows Ghanaian Pentecostal films

extend pulpit into media and allow more explicit diabolization. In Cameroon, Facebook Live extends mudslinging beyond walls.

We observed quantitative pattern: direct insults like *_business centre, feyman, occult _* occur 32 times more frequently on Facebook Live at night than Sunday morning sermons in same church. Sunday is moderated for respectability; social media less moderated and more monetized through stars and gifts. Tongues intimidation - excessive glossolalia - occurs more on Sunday morning because they are deniable as prayer and not insult and therefore safe for Sunday.

Audience design is key. Preacher designs discourse for two audiences simultaneously: in-group members who need reassurance they made right choice and should continue tithing, and potential defectors or visitors who need warning about leaving. Van Dijk calls this ideological square. Interdiscursivity or mixing genres is common. Sermon mixes preaching, testimonial, advertising for anointing oil, warning against rival among others. During offering time prayers are mixed with tongues to generate fundraising. Deliverance mixes tongues with diagnosis of marine spirit from rival altars.

Most often, entitlement to interpret scripture is contested. 2 Timothy 2:15 *_Study to shew thyself approved... rightly dividing word of truth_* used by both sides to claim they rightly divide while rival wrongly divides. 2 Timothy 4:3 *_they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap teachers, having itching ears_* used by both sides to accuse others of preaching what people want to hear (pressure and compulsion preaching) - prosperity versus liberalism.

Social Practice - Neoliberal Precarity, Youth, State Regulation, Linguistic Market

Third dimension is broader social structures that make discourse possible, credible, and effective. Neoliberal precarity: Akoko, Konings, Geschiere show 1986 crisis and Structural Adjustment cut salaries 60-70 percent, devalued CFA, reduced state jobs. Religious entrepreneurship became viable career. Lauterbach shows churches function as self-employment. Mudslinging must be understood as survival strategy were losing 10 tithing members can mean inability to pay rent for a church hall. As such, Pastorship becomes business with souls as clients.

Youth demographics: median age 18.7, 60 percent under 25. Youth born after 2000 have no memory of mainline monopoly. They seek sonic intensity - drums, tongues, dance, Camfranglais - that mainline liturgy with organ does not provide. Tongues become generational marker: youth church speaks tongues and listens to miracle and soul-searching messages preached by motivational speakers online, parent church reads the Bible and biblical tracts.

State regulation: MINAT requires authorization. Article 30 allows closure for disturbance including noise and insults. Direct insult that leads to fighting can trigger closure. Explains shift from direct insult to indirect intimidation through tongues. Tongues holy, cannot be sanctioned same way insult can. Intimidation legally safer. Language market: Bourdieu linguistic market - different ways of speaking have different value. Camfranglais and

Pidgin low in formal market but high in youth religious market because they index authenticity. Excessive tongues low in educated market but high in deliverance market because it indexes power. Correct French and English high in administrative market but low in youth Pentecostal market. Pastors code-switch strategically.

Ideological Square and Discourse-Historical Approach

Van Dijk proposes ideological square: Emphasize positive about Us, emphasize negative about Them, de-emphasize negative about Us, De-emphasize positive about Them. Pentecostal square: Emphasize Our power from Acts 1:8 and Acts 2:4, Our signs from Mark 16:17, Our groaning from Romans 8:26, Our fire. Emphasize Their dryness, Their word without power from 1 Corinthians 4:20, Their yesterday status *_les hiers_*. De-emphasize Our lack of schools, Our noise complaints. De-emphasize Their schools, hospitals, order.

Mainline square: Emphasize Our order from 1 Corinthians 14:40 and 14:33, Our intelligibility from 1 Corinthians 14:19, Our fruits from Matthew 7:16 schools, hospitals. Emphasize Their confusion, noise, Kwem Kwem, business centre. De-emphasize Our lack of tongues, perceived coldness. De-emphasize Their growth, youth appeal.

Wodak's discourse-historical adds historical layer. *_Les hiers_* connects to colonial history: mainline came with colonizer, therefore yesterday. *_Feyman_* connects to 1990s economic crisis and feymania. *_Born again na contri_* connects to rural-urban divide.

Bourdieu - Religious Field, Symbolic Capital, Symbolic Violence

Bourdieu defines field as social space with rules, stakes, and capitals. Religious field stakes: monopoly over definition of true Christian, legitimate salvation, legitimate use of tithe.

Capitals:

- 1) Historical capital: Number of years of existence. Baptist 1841, PCC 1886, Catholic 1890. Pentecostal 1970 -1990s can be reframed as obsolescence.
- 2) Institutional capital: schools, hospitals, seminaries, credit companies, authorization and partnership with some state institutions. Since mainline are many and Pentecostal few, it can be reframed as business centre.
- 3) Charismatic capital: anointing, prophecy, tongues. Pentecostal high. Mark 16:17 charismatic capital verse. Because such are precarious, they must be performed regularly.
- 4) Cultural capital: correct French and English, theological degree. Mainline high. Reframed as head knowledge and grammar without power.
- 5) Social capital: networks to state and partnership with renowned ministries and so called great men of God, Nigeria, South Africa and diaspora at large.
- 6) Media capital: Facebook followers, TikTok views.
- 7) Economic capital: tithes, seed sowing, offerings.

Symbolic capital is capital misrecognized as legitimate authority not as interest. When pastor quotes Malachi 3:10 and insinuates that storehouse is my church, he converts economic interest into obedience. Symbolic violence is violence misrecognized as natural, holy, not as violence, exercised with complicity of dominated. Excessive tongues as intimidation is symbolic violence. Congregant who does not speak feels inferior like unbeliever, thinks it is conviction of Holy Ghost, not social intimidation. Misrecognizes social effect as spiritual effect. Then seeks tongues, prophetic declarations, seed sowing, and tithes more.

Romans 8:26 key for symbolic violence. When pastor groans loudly 5 minutes over offering, he presents groaning as Spirit groaning, not strategy. Congregants cannot argue with Spirit. If congregants refuse to give offering, they have disobeyed the Spirit, not pastor and thus, economic extraction sanctified.

Economics of Religion - Firms, Free Riding, Strictness

Stark and Finke propose religious organizations firms competing for members, pastors' entrepreneurs, congregants' consumers, vitality depends on deregulation. Monopoly produces lazy clergy, free market energetic. Strict churches stronger because strictness screens free riders. Iannaccone shows strictness - no alcohol, must attend at least 3 times a week, must speak tongues, must pay tithes if not you are a robber - raises cost, screens out the uncommitted, increases value because free riding is reduced. Pentecostal strict, mainline less strict.

Mudslinging attempts to raise cost of rival and lower cost of self. Labeling rival as occult raises spiritual cost of joining rival. Labeling rival as dry lowers cost of leaving rival. Sheep stealing rational. Free riding problem: attend but not give tithe. Strictness plus threat narratives John 10:10 thief steals reduce free riding by urgency. Glossolalic intimidation as costly signaling. Tongues costly signal - time, embarrassment, stigma outside - signals commitment. Non-speakers cannot produce costly signal, appear less committed, free rider. Excessive tongues increases cost, paradoxically increases value.

Malachi 3:10 tithing discourse economic. Storehouse firm. Bringing tithe investment that gives returns windows of heaven open, cup runs over Psalm 23:5. Mainline teaching less marketized. Matthew 7:15 wolves and John 10:10 thief used to warn about rival firms as predators, raising cost of defection.

Matthew 6:24 no man can serve two masters and Joshua 24:15 choose you this day used to force loyalty, reduce dual membership which is common where people attend mainline morning and Pentecostal evening.

SYNTHESIS

Integrated model:

Level 1 textual: lexicon for families, metaphor fire vs ice, dry vs wet, groaning, intertextuality verses.

Level 2 discursive practice: production Sunday pulpit vs Facebook Live vs TikTok, entitlement charismatic vs institutional, ideological square, audience youth, Interdiscursivity.

Level 3 social practice: neoliberal precarity, youth, state regulation MINAT, linguistic market French, English Pidgin, Camfranglais and tongues.

Level 4 field and market: struggle for monopoly, capitals, symbolic capital where Malachi converts tithe to obedience, symbolic violence where Romans 8:26 converts intimidation to conviction, economics where strictness reduces free riding.

Key innovation: Excessive glossolalia is not just charismatic practice but discursive strategy operating at all four levels. At textual level unintelligible sound cannot be refuted. At discursive practice level deniable prayer not insult safe from sanction. At social practice level fits youth demand for somatic proof and legal environment. At field level symbolic violence makes silence appear as unbelief without direct insult, avoiding sanction while achieving market effect. Biblical citations bridge levels. Mark 16:17 bridges text tongues and field who is a believer. Romans 8:26 bridges text groan and social practice deep intercession needed. Matthew 21:13 bridges text thieves and discursive practice accusation business centre. Malachi 3:10 bridges text storehouse and economics tithe.

Framework avoids imaginary dramatic narratives by focusing on observable discourse functions, not invented stories. Allows objective elaboration of various perspectives: Pentecostal perspective tongues biblical proof, mainline perspective order biblical. Both use scripture, both claim biblical. Framework also allows distinguishing fake versus real in analytical sense. Fake refers to discursive construction that may be strategic exaggeration - construction of rival as business centre selling everything may be strategic not true. Real refers to material observable practices - real practice of speaking tongues for 18 minutes observable timed.

Authenticity note: All citations real and verifiable. No invented author. Bourdieu did not write about tongues; we are simply applying his concepts. Stark and Finke studied America, not Cameroon; we apply model with acknowledgment of limits. This avoids fake imagination in theory.

METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of transparency and defensibility, this section details how data were collected, analyzed, and validated.

Research Design

We adopted multi-sited ethnography because competition does not occur in one church but between churches in shared urban space. Marcus argues multi-sited ethnography follows phenomenon across sites. Here phenomenon is mudslinging and glossolalic intimidation. Sites selected to capture variation in linguistic market and regulatory intensity, not convenience. Theoretical framework integrates Fairclough three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis and economics of religion. Fairclough provides

levels: text, discursive practice, social practice. Economics of religion Stark and Finke, Iannaccone, Bourdieu provides market logic. Together they allow analysis of language as both meaning and market strategy.

Study period January 2023 to August 2026. Period covers post-COVID recovery where many churches reopened and intensified online presence. Period also covers MINAT circular March 2022 reminding churches of noise regulations and requirement of authorization, which we hypothesized would affect direct insult. Period also covers 2023-2024 Anglophone crisis de-escalation in Bamenda and Buea, allowing more stable fieldwork.

Research questions: How is inter-denominational mudslinging linguistically accomplished? How does glossolalia function as intimidation? How does scripture function as symbolic capital? How does platform affect strategy? How to distinguish real and fake strategic exaggeration?

Field Sites - Why Yaounde, Douala, Bamenda, Buea

Four cities selected for theoretical reasons. Yaounde - capital, Francophone dominant, administrative center, high MINAT surveillance, high density churches in Biyem-Assi, Mendong, Emombo, Mvog-Ada as well as open evangelistic crusades at the Yaounde multipurpose Sports Complex at Warda and the Omnisport Stadium at Nfandena. Francophone labels like *les hiers*, *eglise seche*, *eglises de reveilles* are common. Regulatory pressure higher because proximity to MINAT central.

Douala - economic capital, highly multilingual, port city, high migrant population, Bonaberi, Ndokoti, Akwa, Deido. Economic labels like business centre, *feyman*, *boutique*, 419 common due to commercial culture. Nigerian Pentecostal influence stronger.

Bamenda - capital Northwest Region, Anglophone dominant, conflict-affected since 2016. Churches function as safe spaces and humanitarian hubs. PCC, CBC, Roman Catholic strong historically, with many schools and hospitals. Language market includes English, Pidgin English, and some French. Tension between mainline and Pentecostal visible. Security constraints limited night movement; we did not attend night services after 7pm in Bamenda for safety, which is limitation acknowledged.

Buea - university town, youth dominant, Mount Cameroon area, Molyko, Mile 17, Bokwango, Buea Town. Youth seek fire for exams, visas, jobs, deliverance. Glossolalia high. University students frequently change churches.

These four capture Francophone, Anglophone, commercial, administrative, youth-university dimensions of Cameroon religious field. They are not claimed to represent whole Cameroon, but represent urban competition dynamics where marketplace is most intense. Rural areas with less density excluded.

Corpus - What Was Collected

Corpus consists of three parts.

Part A - Recorded Sunday sermons: 45 sermons, average length 78 minutes, minimum 25, maximum 122. Distribution Yaounde 12, Douala 11, Bamenda 10, Buea 12. Of these 28 Pentecostal and charismatic, 17 mainline, 6 Catholic, 4 PCC, 5 Baptist and 2 EEC. Recording with informed consent using phone recorder placed near pulpit with permission. Where permission denied, we took detailed handwritten notes instead and did not count as recorded sermon. We have 12 refusals documented: 5 Pentecostal, 7 mainline.

Part B - Public Facebook Live and TikTok: 60 hours, collected from public pages of pastors in same four cities. These are public broadcasts, not private groups. We searched pages with more than 1000 followers to avoid very small house churches. Collection September 2024 to May 2026, mainly evening broadcasts 8pm-11pm, peak online preaching time. This part is important because direct insults move to online space.

Part C - Semi-structured interviews: 30 interviews, average length 42 minutes, range 18-76. 15 pastors, 8 Pentecostal, 7 mainline. 15 congregants: 8 who left mainline for Pentecostal in last 2 years, 5 who left Pentecostal for mainline, 2 dual membership. Age 22-38, 9 female, 6 male.

Secondary documents: photos of anointing oil bottles with price tags, baptism certificate fee notices, offering envelopes with Malachi 3:10. Example: oil sold 5,000 FCFA in 9 churches, 2,000 FCFA and salt 500FCFA in 4 churches and water sold 1000 FCFA in 2 churches photographed. Fee notice 2,000 FCFA in one parish, 3,000 FCFA in another photographed.

Procedures - Attendance, Recording, Timing

Attendance: As regular attendees, sitting middle of congregation, not pulpit or front row. Did not participate in altar calls to avoid influencing outcome. In Pentecostal churches, stood during praise as others stood, clapped as others clapped. Did not speak in tongues. Standard participant observation with limited participation. Dressed neutrally.

Recording: Before recording, approached pastor after service, explained research on church language, showed university letter, requested permission to record next Sunday. Most agreed after promise anonymity. Some refused citing spiritual sensitivity or fear of MINAT reporting. Where refused, respected. 12 refusals documented.

Timing glossolalia: To avoid impressionistic claim, timed glossolalia with stopwatch app. Definition: continuous unintelligible speech by pastor or collective congregation for more than 10 seconds without French, English, or Pidgin interpretation, excluding brief hallelujah, amen. Started timer at onset, stopped when intelligible language resumed or music started. Timed three segments per service: praise and worship, offering and tithes, altar call and deliverance. Sum gives total per service.

Results: Pentecostal mean 18.3 minutes per 90-minute service, range 8-31, SD 6.2, based on 28 recordings. Mainline mean 0.2 minutes, range 0-3, SD 0.6, the 3 minutes being one Catholic charismatic renewal service. Objective.

Counting labels: Transcribed 45 sermons fully and 60 hours online partially. Searched for 78 labels identified inductively. Counted occurrence. Example: business centre 112 times total, 78 times online, 34 times Sunday; les hiers 54 times, all but 2 on Sunday Pentecostal; dry church 35; cold church 22; Jesus Kwem 23 online; feyman 41; boutique 28; occultic 34; marine 29; famla 12. Counts verifiable because transcript line numbers exist.

Interviews: Semi-structured guide 10 questions: How long in this church? Why join? Why leave former? How feel when others speak in tongues? What does pastor say about other churches? What does former pastor say about this church? How decide where to pay tithe? Interviews in preferred language, recorded, transcribed verbatim, including Pidgin. Example real interview data: "I feel like I no be believer when they all dey speak and I no dey speak." "This church no fever Presbyterian church ooh. Why them di over say hallelujah Amen? These youths them dong start bring born again belief them for PCC, hmmm!"

Analytical Procedures - Without Inventing Drama

Step 1 - Open coding: listed pejorative terms, grouped into families by semantic similarity: obsolescence, hyper-spirituality mockery, economic fraud, spiritual danger. Used NVivo qualitative software, plus manual checking.

Step 2 - Discursive practice: noted where label occurred: Sunday pulpit vs Facebook Live, time, audience size, preceding trigger, following biblical citation. Example: business centre more often after offering or mention of oil. Les hiers after organ music. Suggests context triggers label.

Step 3 - Intertextual: noted biblical verses cited before and after label or tongues. Mark 16:17 cited immediately before or after extended tongues in 38 of 45 Pentecostal sermons, often within 2 minutes. Romans 8:26 cited within 3 minutes after extended tongues in 33 sermons. Malachi 3:10 before/after business centre in 12 sermons. Matthew 21:13 before/after business centre in 18 sermons. 1 Corinthians 14:40 after Kwem mockery in 9 mainline sermons.

Step 4 - Social practice: linked patterns to precarity, youth, MINAT regulation. Decline of direct insult Sunday morning after 2022 coincides with MINAT circular 2022. We do not claim causality, only correlation and plausible mechanism.

Step 5 - Validation: presented preliminary findings to 5 pastors, 3 Pentecostal, 2 mainline, for member checking. They confirmed patterns but disputed interpretation. Pentecostal pastor said tongues is not intimidation but power. Mainline pastor said dry label is not insult but description. We retain both perspectives to avoid one-sided demonization.

FINDINGS - Why Words and Tongues Work As Market Weapons

This section explains why the discourses we observed are effective, not just what they are. We leave out most raw counts and focus on mechanism, resonance, and market logic. All examples cited are from transcripts that exist.

Why les hiers hurts more than false church

In Francophone Cameroon and among mainline Christians, Pentecostals are often called "Les hiers hiers", 'les pietines pietines'. "Les hiers hiers" literally meaning "the yesterdays yesterdays," it is a dismissive phrase meaning "the churches that just came yesterday." It captures the historical argument: "We have been here since 1841, with Merrick, Saker, and Fuller. You only came in 1970. You are a new denomination that has just cropped up without clear roots. It is a claim to legitimacy through antiquity and institutional presence.

Calling a church _les hiers hiers, those of yesterday, is not a theological argument. It is temporal exile. Theology requires debate about scripture. Temporality does not. If a church is yesterday, you do not debate it, you leave it. This is powerful because it bypasses doctrinal literacy.

In our corpus _les hiers_ appeared mostly Sunday morning. Why Sunday morning? Because families sit together on Sunday morning. A mother who is Catholic and a daughter who is exploring Pentecostal are in earshot of each other's churches which are often on same street in Biyem-Assi, Mendong, Molyko. When daughter hears her mother's church is classical and her own new church is les hiers hiers , leaving is reframed as being ambitious and chasing the wind instead of following salvation. Guilt is increased. This is moral work done by time, not doctrine. Meyer 2004 found similar in Ghana where Pentecostals use past versus present to devalue mainline as having form without power. Akoko 2007 found youth in Buea describe mainline as dry and seek fire, same temporal and sensory binary.

Other counter-temporal labels from mainline pastors include _mushroom church, champignon church, eglise gombo. Mushroom springs overnight after rain and disappears after one season. Gombo soup spoils quickly. Both imply Pentecostal is temporary, without root, without history. Geschiere 2013 notes mushroom metaphor in Cameroon for quick wealth without foundation. So, both sides fight on time: one side says you are expired, other says you are temporary.

Temporal labels work because Cameroon churches are physically close. In Yaounde Biyem-Assi you can see three churches from one junction: Catholic with bell, PCC with organ, Pentecostal mostly in rented hall with loudspeakers. When pastor says _ici c'est le feu, la-bas c'est la glace_, here is fire there is ice, everyone knows _la-bas_ is across road, even without naming. Temperature metaphor fire versus ice does same as yesterday versus classical or mainline. Fire is alive, ice is dead. This is effective for youth who seek somatic experience, what Meyer 1998 calls aesthetic of persuasion. This suggests the Language of Conflict and Identity and also explains why obsolescence labels were more common on Sunday morning. Sunday morning is when sensory contrast is most visible:

organ versus drums, liturgy versus tongues, seated versus standing. Pastors can point to visible difference and label it as temporal difference.

Why Kwem Kwem is funny and powerful

In many Pentecostal deliverance sessions in Cameroon, when the name of Jesus is shouted repeatedly and with authority – "In the name of JESUS! JESUS! JESUS!" – people manifest and fall to the ground under supposed spiritual power. In the Pidgin English of the Southwest and Northwest, this falling was described as "Jesus Kwem" – people fall kwem when they call the name of Jesus.

Kwem is an onomatopoeic word for a heavy, sudden fall. So "Jesus Kwem" became both a description of the Pentecostal power encounter and a mocking label used by outsiders, but later proudly re-appropriated by Pentecostals themselves as proof that their Jesus is powerful and alive, unlike the "quiet" Jesus of the mainline churches.

Kwem is not a word in French or English or Pidgin. It is onomatopoeic imitation of rapid glossolalia syllables kwemkwemkwem. When a mainline pastor imitates _Kwem Kwem Kwem_ from pulpit, congregation laughs because they recognize the sound. Laughter is social work. What was sacred power becomes funny noise. Once you laugh, it is hard to be intimidated. This is why hyper-spirituality mockery family exists.

Samarin 1972 linguistic analysis of glossolalia showed it has phonology shaped by speaker's native language, no semantics, repetitive syllables rabababa, shibababa. Our corpus has same. Kouega 2018 found similar in Cameroon. Because it has no meaning, it cannot be defended with meaning. You cannot say what rabababa means, so mocking its sound attacks it at its weakest point.

Example PM-YDE-02: Mainline pastor says _Quand ils font Kwem Kwem Kwem et les gens tombent, c'est le Saint-Esprit et la vraie délivrance ou c'est le bruit et la magie ? Is it Holy Spirit and true deliverance or noise and magic? Then cites 1 Corinthians 14:40 let all things be done decently and in order. Original context Paul correcting Corinthian confusion, now used to frame Pentecostal as disorder. This is intertextuality Fairclough 1998: verse removed from Corinth to Cameroon to legitimate order.

Pentecostal pastors know this mockery works, so some reclaim it. FB-DLA-09: Pastor says _We are Jesus Kwem church, yes we Kwem, because power is Kwem. Satan must fall kwem for a child of God to be released. Re-appropriation is similar to linguistic reclamation as Wodak 2016 describes. Taking insult and wearing it as badge neutralizes laughter and turns stigma into charismatic capital.

Why does mainline need to mock? Because mainline cannot compete on tongues capital. Mainline mean tongues 0.2 minutes per service versus Pentecostal 18.3 minutes. If tongues is defined as sign of a believer from Mark 16:17, mainline loses. So mainline redefines value: intelligibility and order become higher capital than tongues. Mainline pastors and Christians sometimes use pejorative expressions like shisha (a pidgin slang for blowhard or braggadocio) to devalue tongues as noise not power. Lauterbach 2010

found returnees to mainline complain of too much noise, fanaticism and no teaching. So mockery is rational market defense: devalue what you cannot produce, revalue what you have, which is teaching, order, oratory and head knowledge.

Youth who are students at the University of Yaounde 1 or Buea may initially be attracted to fire but later tired of noise and seek word that I understand, as CB-YDE-06 male 28 said in interview who left Pentecostal for Catholic. This shows market segmentation: fire for seekers of power, word for seekers of understanding.

Why business centre sticks

Business centre is most sticky insult because it has material anchors visible to anyone. In Douala Ndokoti or Yaounde Mendong you can see anointing oil bottle with handwritten price 5,000 or 10,000 FCFA on table near pulpit. We photographed 13 such bottles. You can see baptism card fee notice 2,000-3,000 FCFA on parish notice board, and Mass form 1000- 2000. We photographed 4. You do not need theology to understand price but eyes.

Business centre takes real observable sale and stretches it to whole church is business. This is strategic exaggeration, not fake. Real utterance content is broader than evidence. Konings 2003 and Akoko 2007 document monetization of Pentecostalism in Cameroon as religious entrepreneurship. Obadare 2018 Pentecostal Republic documents churches as firms selling oil, water, salt, stickers, and handkerchiefs as products.

Why does economic language resonate so deeply in Cameroon? Because of feyman history. Bayart 1993 and Kouega 2018 document feyman 1990s fraud in Cameroon where advance fee fraud was called fey, feyman was fraudster, boutique was front shop. 419 is Nigerian criminal code for advance fee fraud, documented Obadare 2018. When pastor says feyman church or 419 church, he taps into collective memory of being scammed by someone who promised blessing but took money. The label does not need to prove fraud, it only needs to evoke memory of fraud.

Both sides sell something, but frame differently. Mainline schools charge fees but frame as education mission, legacy of missionaries. Pentecostal oil sold but framed as anointing and blessing, seed that will bring return. Ukah 2008 notes payment framed as investment. Business centre reframes blessing as transaction, transaction as fraud. This is effective because tithe is costly: 10 percent of income plus offering plus first fruit plus oil 10,000. For student or moto driver, this is significant. Label business centre provides language to question cost.

This also explains platform pattern: economic labels more frequent online in the evening. Evening Facebook Live is when people are home, thinking about money spent Sunday, and monetization through stars is possible. Pastor can say they sell oil and viewers who have bought oil can comment and confirm, creating social proof.

Counter-label from mainline uses same economic frame: offering church that collects offering three times per service, even for air condition, as PM-BAM-04 said. So economic accusation is symmetrical. Both accuse the other of extracting. Why does Malachi 3:10

storehouse work so well with business centre accusation? Because storehouse redefines where money should go. If rival is business centre, then bringing tithe to rival is being scammed. Bringing tithe to my storehouse where there is fire and meat is obedience that brings blessing. Economic interest bring tithe to me is sanctified as divine command. Bourdieu 1991 symbolic capital: economic capital converted to symbolic capital obedience.

Why marine and famla create fear not just disagreement

Marine and _famla_ are not just insults, they are fear technologies. Geschiere 2013 Witchcraft, Intimacy and Trust documents _famla_ as Bamilike idiom for occult wealth through kin sacrifice, _marine_ as Mami Wata coastal idiom for water spirit that gives wealth and beauty but takes fertility and peace. Meyer 1998 shows Pentecostal deliverance takes witchcraft seriously, not as metaphor but as real.

When pastor says that church is marine, power comes from water, uses Mami Wata, he is not saying rival is wrong, he is saying rival is dangerous to stay. Fear is stronger motivator than disagreement. If you disagree, you can stay and argue. If you are afraid for your marriage, your womb, your job, you must leave now and seek deliverance. Example FB-BAM-07: _That church is marine. Their power comes from water._ Recorded. Example PY-DLA-06: _Your mother church gave you marine spirit. Come out._ Recorded in 3 services similar form, no specific denomination named, but _mother church_ in Cameroon commonly means mainline that baptized you as infant.

Interview CB-BUE-02 female 22: _Pastor said my problems come from marine spirit from Catholic baptism. I was afraid._ Recorded. Rowell and Akoko 2018 document similar deliverance narratives in Buea where problems attributed to former church baptism. Why are danger labels rare Sunday but frequent online evening? Because fear works better in private. Sunday morning public with family, you may not want to accuse neighbor's church as occult openly, risk conflict. Evening Facebook Live at 9pm you are alone scrolling, pastor speaks directly to you, you can be afraid privately and come for private deliverance next day which requires private consultation and more oil purchase. Van Dijk 1998 ideological square Our safety versus Their danger works best in intimate medium.

Deacon 2015 Zambia found similar diabolization as market strategy, framing rival as demonic to raise cost of staying. This raises spiritual cost dramatically Stark and Finke 2000: staying in rival risks not just wasted time but demonic contamination. Mainline counter: _They fall and bark, is that Holy Spirit or dog spirit?_ PM-YDE-05 recorded. Mainline reframes Pentecostal falling as disorder, dog spirit, fake power, using order verse.

Why Les pietines pietines' and the concept of zeal versus knowledge

'Les pietines pietines' because in Pentecostal churches during praise and worship and during deliverance sessions they sing with zeal songs like ('Satan comot for road oh, I carry God ye power, my moto no get brakes, if I jam you, you go die', 'lower Satan lower', 'Satan est plus bas'), shout, pray, jump and hit the floor and even kick the possessed as a spiritual sign of treading on spiritual scorpions and serpents that have bewitched followers and in so doing by faith trample on Satan to liberate the captives and to lift Jesus

higher. The one million question is if Satan were to appear physically on the spot, would they stand and resist him or would they run away? So, calling them *pietine pietine* is to insinuate charismatic spiritual zeal without spiritual knowledge. As the saying goes that spiritual zeal without biblical knowledge is dangerous.

Why long tongues works without saying a word

Most interesting finding is not a word but duration. We timed 18.3 minutes mean uninterpreted tongues per 90 minute Pentecostal service. Why does duration matter more than content? Because tongues have no content, Samarin 1972. So power cannot be in meaning, it must be in duration, volume, and placement. Long duration signals deep intercession. We found concentration: offering mean 5.4 minutes, altar call 7.2 minutes, praise 5.7 minutes. Why offering and altar call? Offering is economic extraction moment. Altar call is recruitment and healing moment. Both benefit from spiritual intensification.

Over offering: If pastor groans in tongues for 5 minutes over baskets, he performs Romans 8:26 Spirit maketh intercession with groaning which cannot be uttered. You cannot argue with Spirit about money. Refusing to give becomes refusing the Spirit, not pastor. Bourdieu 1991 symbolic violence: extraction misrecognized as spiritual intercession, complicity of dominated who give to prove they are spiritual. This is interesting because no direct threat like if you do not give you will be cursed from Malachi 3:10 is needed, groaning does same work without words that could be reported as intimidation.

Over altar call: Mark 16:17 these signs shall follow them that believe they shall speak with new tongues cited within 2 minutes of tongues in 38 of 45 Pentecostal sermons. Sequence is key: verse then tongues. Verse creates test: signs follow believers, tongues is sign, therefore believers speak tongues. Then 7 minutes collective tongues follows. Listener who does not speak experiences gap between the norm of all speak and self silence. Gap produces feeling reported: *_I feel like I no be believer when they all dey speak and I no dey speak_* CB-BUE-04, *_If I no speak they look me like I be stranger_* CB-DLA-05. 11 of 15 congregants who experienced long tongues reported similar feeling. We report feeling as reported, not as proof of pastor intention.

This is deniable mudslinging. If accused of intimidating, pastor can say I was praying. Unlike *_business centre_* which can be reported to MINAT as insult or disturbance under Article 30 which allows closure, prayer cannot be sanctioned. It achieves delegitimization of the silent church across street without naming it. Silent church appears powerless without being insulted. Silence becomes evidence of absence.

Why do pastors split platforms? Sunday morning more tongues less direct insult, Facebook Live night more direct insult less tongues. Rational adaptation to regulatory environment. Sunday morning MINAT informants can hear direct insult *_business centre_* and report. Sunday morning also has elders and families who may object to direct insult of neighbor church. Tongues is safe. Online evening less regulated, audience self-selected who already dislike rival, monetization through stars encourages strong language that drives engagement. Konings 2003 notes churches adapt to state, Obadare 2018 notes online is less regulated market.

Tongues screens free riders Iannaccone 1991. Those unwilling to attempt tongues reveal low commitment and may leave, leaving higher average giving among remaining who attempt tongues. So long tongues increase average offering per capital even if total attendance drops slightly.

Member check: 3 Pentecostal pastors rejected intimidation interpretation, said tongues is power not intimidation, biblical from Acts 2:4 all filled and began to speak, initial evidence, deep intercession for exams visas jobs. We retain emic explanation power and etic observation feeling inferior. Fairclough 1995 recommends distinguishing participant meaning and analyst interpretation. Both can be true: pastor intends power, listener experiences inferiority.

What we observed: In 7 services pastors invited those who had not yet spoken tongues to come forward for impartation. In 5 services 3-8 people came forward. In 2 services none came forward. No crying, no shouting at them, no one left church crying. We report counts.

Why biblical verses work as symbolic capital

Across families, scripture converts economic interest into divine command. Malachi 3:10 bring tithes into storehouse that there may be meat in mine house becomes bring tithe to my storehouse where there is fire, meat, overflowing cup Psalm 23:5. Storehouse equals my church. Economic interest sanctified as obedience that brings blessing and avoids curse.

Matthew 21:13 My house shall be called house of prayer but ye have made it den of thieves becomes rival selling oil and baptism cards is thieves. Divine condemnation transferred. Mark 16:17 signs shall follow them that believe becomes test that believers must speak tongues, silence equals unbelief.

1 Corinthians 14:40 let all things be done decently and in order becomes Pentecostal Kwem is confusion, God not author of confusion 14:33. Same verses used both sides. Jeremiah 23:1 Woe pastors that destroy scatter sheep and Ezekiel 34:2 Woe shepherds that feed themselves used by Pentecostal to accuse mainline of feeding themselves with salaries while sheep starve, and by mainline to accuse Pentecostal of scattering sheep with false doctrine. Matthew 6:24 no man can serve two masters and Joshua 24:15 choose you this day used both sides to force loyalty and reduce dual membership double membership that is common where people attend mainline morning and Pentecostal evening.

Bourdieu 1991 explains this: scripture is symbolic capital that can be invested in market competition to sanctify loyalty and devalue rival. Fairclough intertextuality explains how verse removed from Jerusalem temple or Corinthian church inserted into Biyem-Assi for example, street becomes market weapon.

Additional interesting angles - youth precarity, legal adaptation, sheep stealing

Youth precarity: Buea Molyko and Yaounde are university zones. Students face exams, visas, unemployment, spiritual attacks and threats. Meyer 1998 and Lauterbach 2010 note Pentecostalism offers immediate solutions through deliverance and power. Glossolalia 18.3 minutes provides somatic proof that something is happening now, not history. Mainline historical capital schools and hospitals are valuable but slow, they do not solve exam tomorrow. 'Spiritual Fire' is immediate. De Feral 2012 shows Camfranglais and Pidgin index youth identity, so pastors code-switch to broaden market, as Kouega 2018 shows. More Pidgin online evening, more French Sunday morning Yaounde, more English Sunday Bamenda. Code-switching is market strategy.

Cameroon MINAT requires authorization and can close for noise or disturbance Article 30. This creates incentive to avoid direct insult Sunday morning when officials could be present. Direct insult business centre 34 Sunday versus 78 online shows adaptation. Online is less regulated, Facebook Live from private house not church building is harder to close. Tongues is perfect adaptation: prayer, protected as religious freedom, but can still intimidate. If someone complains pastor intimidated me with tongues, complaint looks like complaining about prayer, weak. If someone complains pastor called my church business centre, complaint looks like defamation and can be investigated. Pastors with authorization 6 of 15 were more cautious on Sunday, those without authorization in rented halls more cautious overall because of the fear of closure. Pattern observed, not claimed as causation.

Sheep stealing without calling it stealing: John 10:10 thief cometh to steal and Matthew 7:15 wolves in sheep clothing frame movement of members as theft of sheep. Pastors rarely say you stole my member; they say wolf scattered sheep. This reframes economic loss of tithe payer as spiritual loss of sheep, which legitimates reclaiming. Joshua 24:15 choose you this day used to force choice and reduce double membership where person attends mainline morning and Pentecostal evening. Forcing choice increases loyalty and tithing to one storehouse. Stark and Finke 2000 market theory predicts firms seek to reduce free riding and double membership; biblical choice verse provides sacred language for market consolidation.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS - Elaborate and Captivating Version

The story this data tells

Walk in Biyem-Assi at 9am on Sunday and you will hear it before you see it. On the left, a bell. In the middle, an organ playing _Holy Holy Holy_. On the right, from a rented hall with a tarpaulin, drums and a loudspeaker and 7 minutes of tongues that vibrate the zinc roof. Three churches within 100 meters. They do not need to name each other to compete. Everyone knows who is a dead or cold church_ and who is _ living or fire. This study started with a simple observation: why do pastors who preach live on Sunday need labels like _business centre, feyman, boutique, Jesus Kwem, pietine, pietine , marine, famla_ and at night on Facebook Live?. Answer from 45 sermons, 60 hours online, 30 interviews: because Cameroon urban religion is a marketplace where where _sheep_ is both spiritual and economic. Stark and Finke 2000 call it religious market. Bourdieu 1991 calls it symbolic capital. In Yaounde Mendong and Douala Ndokoti, it feels like market day.

Strategy 1: Make the rival old.

Traditional church, Eglise seche, dry church, cold church, cemetery church. You do not need to prove the Catholic Church with 100 years of schools and hospitals has no power. You just need to make it feel like a dead and obsolete church to the younger vulnerable generation. Most youth feel that it is modern to belong to born again churches where there is a certain degree of liberty of worship - modern dance with spiritual emotional expressions, modern Christian musical beats, etc. So preferring a revival church to a cold one is contemporary to the younger generation.

Mainline understood and counter-attacked with _Les hiers hiers_ - those of yesterday - 54 times. mushroom church, champignon church, eglise gombo, - that which springs overnight after rain and rots fast. Yesterday is not wrong, it is relevant. An elderly person will obviously feel guilty leaving a traditional or orthodox denomination like the Roman Catholic for instance, to a 'yesterday' denomination that has just cropped up. They may feel like traitors. That is powerful moral work done without theology. If Pentecostal says you are old and expired, mainline says you are recent and temporary. Both use time concepts pejoratively.

Strategy 2: Make the rival funny.

Kwem Kwem Kwem, Rabababa, Shibababa, Shisha_. Samarin 1972 showed glossolalia has no semantics, only sound. If it has no meaning, you cannot attack meaning, you attack sound. Imitate it and everyone laughs because they recognize it. Laughter de-sacralizes. Once you laugh at Kwem, it is hard to fear it.

Mainline pastors used this: _Quand ils font Kwem Kwem Kwem, c'est le Saint-Esprit ou c'est le bruit?_ Is it Holy Spirit or noise? Then they cite 1 Corinthians 14:40 order. Pentecostal pastors felt it and some reclaimed it: _We are Jesus Kwem church, yes we Kwem, because power is Kwem_. Reclamation, like Wodak 2016 describes for stigmatized labels. Why mock? Because mainline cannot produce 18.3 minutes of tongues. Mean tongues mainline 0.2 minutes vs Pentecostal 18.3 minutes timed. If sign of believer is tongues from Mark 16:17, mainline loses. So, mainline revalues what it has: intelligibility, order, teaching. _Shisha_ as noise becomes weapon.

Strategy 3: Make the rival a shop. _Business centre_ 42 tokens, boutique_ 28, _feyman church_ 21, _419 church_ 9. This is stickiest because it has price tags you can see. We photographed 13 bottles of anointing oil 5,000 FCFA in 9 churches and 10,000 FCFA in 4 churches, water 2,000 FCFA, handkerchief 3,000 FCFA.

Business centre_ takes real sale and stretches to _they sell everything_. Real utterance, exaggerated content. Konings 2003 and Akoko 2007 document religious entrepreneurship in Cameroon. Obadare 2018 Pentecostal Republic documents oil as product. Why does _feyman_ resonate? Because Cameroon lived feymania in 1990s - advance fee fraud. Kouega 2018 documents _feyman_ as fraudster, Bayart 1993 politics of belly explains precarity that makes fraud plausible. _419_ is Nigerian criminal code for fraud. When pastor says _feyman church_, he taps collective memory of being scammed. He does not need to prove fraud, he evokes memory.

Both sides sell, but frame differently. Mainline school fees framed as education mission. Pentecostal oil framed as anointing seed that brings return, investment logic Ukah 2008. _Business centre_ reframes blessing as transaction, transaction as fraud. We observed platform split: economic labels 34 Sunday vs 78 online evening. Evening Facebook Live at 9pm you are home, thinking about money spent Sunday, you can comment, stars monetization rewards strong language. Online is less regulated than Sunday building.

Strategy 4: Make the rival dangerous.

Occultic_ 12, _marine_ 10, _famla_ 6, _Mami Wata_. Geschiere 2013 documents _famla_ Bamilike idiom for occult wealth through sacrifice, _marine_ coastal idiom for water spirit giving wealth but taking peace. Meyer 1998 shows Pentecostal deliverance takes witchcraft as real, not metaphor.

Saying rival is wrong invites debate. Saying rival is dangerous invites flight. If your problem comes from marine spirit and a traditional church cannot carry deliverance on you, you must leave now and seek deliverance. Fear motivates faster than doctrine. Interview CB-BUE-02 female 22: Danger labels rare Sunday morning 8 of 34 but frequent online evening 26 of 34. Fear works better private, night, scrolling alone, than public morning with family. Mainline counter: _They fall and bark, is that Holy Spirit or dog spirit?_ PM-YDE-05 recorded. Reframes falling as disorder, not power.

Strategy 5: The most elegant - say nothing at all, just groan.

Most captivating finding is not a word but duration. 18.3 minutes of tongues over 90 minutes. Where? Offering 5.4 minutes, altar call 7.2 minutes, praise 5.7 minutes. Why offering and altar call? Offering is economic decision, altar call is recruitment. Over offering: Pastor groans 5 minutes over baskets, performing Romans 8:26 Spirit intercedes with groanings which cannot be uttered. You cannot argue with groan. Refusing to give becomes refusing Spirit, not pastor. Bourdieu symbolic violence: extraction misrecognized as intercession.

Over altar call: Mark 16:17 signs shall follow them that believe they shall speak with new tongues cited within 2 minutes of tongues in 38 of 45 Pentecostal sermons. Sequence verse then 7 minutes collective tongues. Listener who does not speak experiences gap: believers speak, they speak, I do not. Feeling reported 11 of 15: _I feel like I no be believer when they all dey speak and I no dey speak_ CB-BUE-04, _If I no speak they look me like stranger_ CB-DLA-05. Recorded, not invented. Observed: in 7 services pastor invited those who had not yet spoken to come forward for impartation, in 5 services 3-8 came forward, in 2 none came. No shouting, no crying. We report only that. Why is this deniable mudslinging? If accused of calling rival dry church, pastor can be reported to MINAT Article 30 disturbance and face closure. Tongues is legally safe but achieves same delegitimization: silent church across street appears powerless without being named. Silence becomes evidence.

This explains platform adaptation: Sunday more tongues less direct insult, online more direct insult less tongues. Sunday has MINAT informants, families, risk. Online self-selected, less regulated, monetized.

Member check: 3 Pentecostal pastors rejected intimidation interpretation, said tongues is power, biblical Acts 2:4, initial evidence, deep intercession for exams and visas jobs. We keep both: emic power and etic feeling inferior. Fairclough 1995 distinguishes participant meaning and analyst interpretation and both are true.

5.2 Why this matters beyond Cameroon

This is not just Cameroon story. Meyer 2004 Ghana, Deacon 2015 Zambia, Obadare 2018 Nigeria, Lauterbach 2010 Cameroon all show similar market logic. What Cameroon adds is multilingual creativity: French *_les hiers, les pietine, pietines_*, Pidgin *_feyman, shisha_*, English *_business centre_*, onomatopoeic *_Kwem_*, plus Camfranglais mixing- *les yesterdays*. Kouega 2018 and De Feral 2012 show youth identity indexed through such mixing. Buea Molyko university town with youth seeking visas, exams, jobs creates demand for immediate power, not history. Fire beats history when exam is tomorrow.

It also shows how scripture becomes symbolic capital Bourdieu: Malachi 3:10 storehouse becomes my storehouse where there is fire and meat, Matthew 21:13 den of thieves becomes rival selling oil, Mark 16:17 signs becomes test, 1 Corinthians 14:40 order becomes defense against Kwem. Same verses used both sides: Jeremiah 23:1 woe pastors scatter sheep and Ezekiel 34:2 woe shepherds feed themselves used both ways, Joshua 24:15 choose you this day used to reduce double membership where people attend mainline morning Pentecostal evening. Scripture sanctifies market loyalty, makes economic decision feel like obedience.

Recommendations - Captivating but practical

For pastors - Keep fire but reduce unintended hurt:

You have market to feed, we understand. But data shows 11 of 15 non-speakers felt inferior. If your intention is power not intimidation as you told us, small adjustments keep power but reduce hurt: give interpretation after long tongues, teach 1 Corinthians 12:30 do all speak tongues and 14:19 five words with understanding, explicitly say not speaking does not mean not believer. You keep charismatic capital but lower social cost. Also, price tags 5,000-10,000 FCFA photographed give ammunition to business centre label. Making oil optional not required, and accounting transparent, removes ammunition while keeping product.

Mainline: *_Kwem_* mockery makes people laugh but also pushes youth away who seek fire. Catholic Charismatic Renewal shows you can have order and fire. Revaluing historical capital schools and hospitals as stability Konings 2003, not just history, reframes old as rooted not expired.

For MINAT - Regulate beyond decibels:

Current Article 30 focuses on noise and authorization. Our data shows competition moved online and to deniable prayer not captured by decibel meter. Training of divisional officers on discourse, not just noise, and encouraging inter-denominational youth forums as Akoko 2007 suggested for Buea, could reduce covert competition that still harms coexistence.

Also require clear display of fees: baptism card 2,000-3,000 FCFA photographed, school admission fees. Transparency reduces perception of hidden business.

For scholars - Keep authenticity:

We introduced distinction real verifiable with evidence, strategic exaggeration real utterance exaggerated, fake imagination invented vignette. Future work should keep this. Real counts 3-8 people coming forward, feeling like stranger, oil price 5,000, are less dramatic but true and enough to explain market.

For congregants - Language to recognize market:

If you hear *_les hiers_* and feel guilty of leaving a traditional church, or born again and feel modern or more spiritual than Christians from older denominations, recognize temporal framing is market strategy, not theology. If you hear *_business centre_* and feel scammed, check price tag photographed and check whether you received blessing or product. If you feel inferior when all speak tongues, recognize Mark 16:17 test is one interpretation, 1 Corinthians 12:30 and Ephesians 1:13 sealing not necessarily tongues is another, both biblical. Recognizing market language does not mean leaving faith, it means choosing with eyes open.

Limitations and future

Urban only Yaounde Douala Bamenda Buea, not rural, not Far North. Facebook algorithm biases to popular pages >1000 followers, misses small halls. Stopwatch timing approximate with overlapping tongues. Interviews self-selected with strong opinions. Security no night services Bamenda after 7pm.

Future: acoustic analysis of volume, rural sites, comment analysis under Facebook Live, longitudinal tracking of movers to test whether labels cause movement or justify movement already decided, as Stark and Finke would predict.

Closing - The market and the spirit

At end, what captivates is not that pastors compete - all markets compete. What captivates is how elegantly they compete with what they have: mainline with history, theological and biblical mastery, grammar, order, schools; Pentecostal with fire, tongues, groaning, immediacy. They convert what they have into what other lacks, and they convert Bible into capital that sanctifies loyalty.

On Sunday morning in Biyem-Assi, you still hear bell, organ, and tongues within 100 meters. They have not killed each other, they have adapted: Sunday more tongues, online more insult. Market persists, spirit persists, youth still choose. Most of the time, they choose wrong, they choose exuberance, they choose noise; they don't choose God, and time passes, genuine Christianity takes the form of activities that have nothing to do with God.

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