

## TRANSLATION, ANGLOPHONE WOMEN'S WRITING AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY IN CAMEROON

Tanyitiku Enaka Agbor Bayee, PhD

Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters University of Buea

**Abstract:** This research set out to investigate opinions about the impact of translation on Anglophone écriture feminine in Cameroon, a bilingual country where English and French are spoken as official languages. The study was based on the premise that where two literary poly systems exist in binary juxtaposition, the writings of one group belong to what Woolf (2002: 180-191) calls the "third space. The study sought to examine the opinions of Anglophone écriture feminine writers in Cameroon about the benefits of literary translation, opinions about the status of Anglophone écriture feminine literature and how it can be improved on, as well as opinions about translation as a threat to the survival of Anglophone women's writing. The Muted Group Theory was applied to this study to investigate écriture feminine writers as a silenced minority. The research was designed and conducts Edina mixed method. Convenience sampling was used to intentionally select twenty-one (21) écriture feminine writers for the study. The data were collected through a mixed questionnaire, which combined fifteen closed-ended questions (with a five-point Likert scale) and one open-ended question. Data collected from the close ended questions were first processed using the Excel Spreadsheet. Thereafter, participants' responses were coded and keyed, then the data from the close-ended questions were exported into SPSS version 25 and analysed using descriptive statistics, such as, frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The data from the open-ended question were analysed thematically, using themes and quotations. Lastly, the findings were presented on frequency distribution and thematic tables. Regarding question one, 85.1% of the respondents opined that translation is beneficial to the Anglophone écriture féminine writers, while a few 5.4% disagreed and 9.5% were neutral. Concerning question two, 49.5% had the opinion that Anglophone écriture féminine writing in Cameroon does not have a low status, while 26.7% responded that it does and 23.8% were neutral. The overall mean of 2.23, even below the cut-off point of 2.5 on a scale of 1-4, implied that the status of Anglophone feministwriting is low. Concerning opinions about how to protect Anglophone feministwriters as a group, the respondents proposed creating a professional association to protect their rights and their literature as well as building a strong network of écriture féminine writers that will be a watchdog of the Anglophone literary poly system.

**Key Words:** Translation, Écriture Féminine, Anglophone Women Writers, Muted Group Theory.

### Résumé

Cette étude a pour but d'examiner l'impact de la traduction sur l'écriture féminine anglophone au Cameroun. Elle part du principe selon lequel là où deux poly systèmes littéraires existent, les écrits de l'un d'entre eux appartiennent à ce que Woolf (2002:180-191) dénomme le « troisième espace. » L'étude a donc cherché à déterminer les opinions des sujets sur les bénéfices de la traduction littéraire pour les écrivaines féminines anglophones du Cameroun, leurs opinions sur le statut de leur art et les moyens de l'améliorer, et d'évaluer leurs opinions sur la traduction comme une menace pour la survie de l'écriture féminine anglophone. La Muted Group Theory a été appliquée à cette étude afin d'étudier les écrivaines anglophones en tant que minorité réduite au silence. La recherche a été conçue et menée selon une méthode mixte. Un échantillonnage de convenance a été utilisé pour sélectionner intentionnellement vingt-et-un (21) écrivaines féministes pour l'étude. Les données ont été recueillies à l'aide d'un questionnaire mixte, qui combinait quinze questions fermées (avec une échelle de Likert en cinq points) et une question ouverte, qui répondaient toutes aux trois questions de recherche. Les données recueillies à partir des questions fermées ont d'abord été traitées à l'aide d'une feuille de calcul Excel. Les réponses des participants ont été codées, puis les données des questions fermées ont été exportées vers SPSS version 25 et analysées à l'aide de statistiques descriptives, telles que la fréquence, le pourcentage, la moyenne et l'écart-type. Les données de la question ouverte ont été analysées de manière thématique, en utilisant des thèmes et des citations. Enfin, les résultats ont été présentés sous forme de

distribution de fréquences et de tableaux thématiques. En ce qui concerne la première question de recherche sur les bénéfiques de la traduction, 85,1 % des personnes interrogées ont eu l'opinion globale que la traduction était bénéfique pour les écrivaines anglophones, tandis que 5,4 % n'étaient pas d'accord et 9,5 % n'avaient pas d'opinion. Pour ce qui est de la deuxième question, 49,5 % des personnes interrogées ont répondu que l'écriture féminine anglophone au Cameroun n'est pas mal considérée, tandis que 26,7 % ont répondu par l'affirmative et 23,8 % ont été neutres. La moyenne générale de 2,23, même en dessous du seuil de 2,5 sur une échelle de 1 à 4, implique que le statut de l'écriture féminine anglophone est faible. Pour ce qui est des opinions sur la façon de protéger les écrivaines féministes anglophones en tant que groupe, les répondants ont proposé de créer une association qui protégerait leurs droits, ainsi qu'un réseau solide d'écrivaines qui serait un gardien du poly système littéraire anglophone.

**Mots clés : Traduction, Écriture Féminine, Ecrivaines anglophones, Muted Group Theory.**

## I. Introduction

Translation began to be consolidated and taken seriously as a scientific field of studies in the 1970s, while interest in its theory and practice, which is greatly characterised by inter disciplinarily, experienced an exponential growth in the 1980s. The sociology of translation connects translation as a social phenomenon within a society where different social groups co-exist as diverse co-cultures involved in critical human interaction. As such, ignoring the complex relationship between authors and translators would be a calamity to the booming discipline that is translation studies.

Indeed, although co-cultures are constituents of national cultures, smaller cultures are usually seen as conforming to the dominant culture, with the conforming believing that they are losing their sense of belonging to the larger culture(s) whose values tend to dominate. Conforming co-cultures have their own narration and generate their own vision of the world through their literatures. Therefore, translation plays the mediating function by adjudicating between these dominating and dominated groups (Tyulenev 2014:34). As Santaemilia (2005:6) thus posits, translation is not an innocent activity, for it does not only entail cross-cultural manipulation, but a cross-ideological manipulation as well. That is why Santaemilia (2006) further claims that translation is a privileged loci for (re)producing and (re)negotiating identities because through translation, the invisible becomes visible, while the unworthy becomes worthy and vice versa.

In fact, the role of translation in an increasingly multicultural and multilingual world of literatures cannot be overemphasised, to the extent that Bush (2012:512) posits that translation is the key mechanism, dynamic and metaphor in theorising and creating world literature. Different realities exist in societies in which translation plays a significant role in the existence of their national literatures. In such societies, diverse cultures are brought together through translated literatures, while individual cultural orientations are obliterated due to contact in languages brought about by translation. In fact, (Katan 1999:164) postulates that "there is a fundamental ethnocentric impulse to all translation," which is a testament that, all translation is, first and foremost, a cultural activity, undertaken to promote one culture to the detriment of another. Hence, translation brings out the translator's primal instinct to serve his own culture first before the target culture is served. Meanwhile, Lefevere (1992:18) contends that "when you offer a translation to the nation, that nation will always look at it as an act of violence against itself ..." because, for as long as translation has existed, it has not succeeded in ridding itself of its notoriety as an activity that is at the service of the target culture before all else. Debates about the status of translated literature vis-a-vis original language texts animate discussions in translation studies, reshaping arguments about the place of minority writers and the translations of their works within wider literary poly systems where they exist. This is most common when originals of translated works belong to marginal sociolinguistic substrata of their societies, as is the case of the Anglophone écriture féminine writers investigated in this study. Hence, questions are posed regarding opinions about the production of translations to these minority women writers, as well as opinions about the impacts of different stakeholders in their re-production and reception by a new set of readers (Karajagdiu and Mrasori (2021:2332).

In fact, Venuti (1995) asserts that the position of the translator within the target language literary poly system is more of a burning issue than that of the original writer within the source text culture. Thus, the current debate that the translator's visibility in the translated text seems to subvert the author's identity in the original motivated this study. This research, therefore, seeks to investigate opinions about the status of Anglophone écriture féminine writing in Cameroon, a bilingual country in which English and French are spoken. This investigation is based on Anglophone écriture féminine writers who opted to remain anonymous in their responses. They were selected for this research because they are newcomers struggling to navigate the deep waters of the English literary scene, in a country where they face stiff competition from prolific French writers, such as Djaili Amadou Amal, Were Liking, Calixthe Beyala, Djamidi Bond, Jeanne Mbella Ngom, etc., whose writings have transcended both space and time as internationally acclaimed écriture féminine works. The rationale for this study, therefore, is to conduct a study on opinions about the capacity for survival of translated Anglophone écriture féminine in Cameroon.

## II. History of Cameroon's Bilingualism

As a preamble to discussing issues which pertain to the translation of Anglophone women writers in Cameroon, it is, a priori, necessary to situate this study in context of the history of the bilingual linguistic landscape of Cameroon, the legal framework of bilingualism as well as its motivations. Lastly, this background section attempts to define the terms Francophone and Anglophone, and to justify why Anglophones are considered a linguistic minority in Cameroon.

### 2.1 Origin of Bilingualism in Cameroon

According to Ngoh (1979), in 1884, Germany colonised Cameroon and made Buea its first capital, before it was later transferred to Yaounde. After the defeat of Germany in the First World War, the German colony was placed under the mandate of the League of Nations. From 1919, Cameroon was partitioned between France and Great Britain as a trust territory, with about 80% (East Cameroon) given to France, and 20% (West Cameroon) to Great Britain. The latter decided to administer its portion as an integral part of Northern Nigeria. East Cameroon gained independence on 1 January 1960, while West Cameroon remained in Nigeria until 1 October 1961, and opted to join East Cameroon through a referendum on 11 February 1961. This led to the birth of the Federal Republic of Cameroon. Hence, from 1961, Cameroon became a bilingual country with French and English as its official languages.

Notwithstanding the fact that English and French are spoken in Cameroon, there is no language policy to define the status of these languages. Official bilingualism in Cameroon is spelled out in Law No. 96/06 of 18 January 1996. The fundamental law clearly stipulates that English and French shall enjoy the same status and privileges, by stating in its preamble that:

The official languages of the Republic of Cameroon shall be English and French, both languages having the same status. The State shall guarantee the promotion of bilingualism throughout the country. It shall endeavour to protect and promote national languages.

In fact, although most educated Cameroonians can communicate in the two official languages, they however have greater proficiency in just one of the two official languages. Ayafor (2005:123-142) claims that political, socio-cultural and linguistic factors motivate bilingualism in Cameroon, as elucidated in the following paragraphs. In terms of political factors, bilingualism is seen as a strategy for socio-political integration. It is conceived as a force that unites the English and French-speaking regions of Cameroon, as felt from the actions and expressions of politicians. Furthermore, talking about socio-cultural factors, Ayafor (2005:123-142) contends that the government makes concerted efforts to maintain and valorise the distinctive cultures and traditions of the Francophones and Anglophones (through different educational and judicial systems). In addition to English and French more than 200 local languages are also spoken in Cameroon (Panji 2011). Lastly, talking about linguistic factors, both English and French are promoted in the public sector and formal domains of the private sector. It involves the use of English and French in government communication, documentation, decrees, ministerial circulars, notices, signposts, road signs, the Official Gazette, etc. (Ayafor 2005:123-142).

### 2.2 Anglophone Cameroonians as a Linguistic Minority

The United Nations Human Rights Council (2014) reports that Anglophones constitute a co-culture in the Cameroon sociolinguistic landscape, as a minority group that adheres to distinctive values, beliefs, behaviours, that set them apart from the larger society, which is composed of mostly Francophones. Anglophones occupy two out of the ten regions and make up only 20% of the population of the country. Although the Constitution states that French and English are official languages with equal status, French is the most used language, since it is spoken by more than 80% of Cameroonians. In the English-speaking regions, it is a common belief that Anglophones suffer discrimination, especially in areas such as access to appointed posts and political office.

Hence, it is believed that Anglophones are marginalised, and have lower access to political power, as compared to Francophone. Furthermore, the general outcry is that Cameroonians from the French co-culture are appointed to senior positions in public offices and have access to employment in the public service without being bilingual, whereas this is rarely the case for Anglophones. Also, French is predominantly used as the language of Government and administration in most regions, while most official documents are not translated into English, as stipulated by the Constitution. Anglophones believe that Francophones are not motivated to learn English, while they are forced to learn French to have access to the status and opportunities. Lastly, Anglophone regions have a lower rate of economic, social, and infrastructural development than the others (United Nations Human Rights Council 2014).

In fact, Konings (2011:1) claims that Anglophones accuse the government for having used the lure of bilingualism as a tool for national integration to obtain a centralised unitary State. This factor has significantly contributed to the fact that Anglophones developed consciousness as a marginalised group. According to Etchu (2005), although Anglophones make up 17% of the population, which is 3.4 million inhabitants out of 20 million, only 1.4% are usually successful in public exams that guarantee direct recruitment to the public service.

Therefore, the government does not employ enough on Anglophones into the public service sector. Also, notwithstanding all claims that the State is a guarantor of the promotion of bilingualism, regional balance is not respected in appointments (Bobda 2001:153). Furthermore, the criteria of origin and language, which were applied in the past for these appointments, have become difficult to define over the years, given that some Francophones now identify as Anglophones well Anglophones also identify as Francophones merely by their choice of language and the sub-system of education in which they choose to study. All these factors have further compounded the issue of Anglophone marginalisation in Cameroon.

In context of identity politics as explained above, Anglophone *écriture féminine* authors struggle to write not only from a marginal position as women, but from a doubly marginal position as Anglophone women who belong to a minority. Hence, translation is considered a threat to Anglophone feminist literature in Cameroon, given that it is believed that instead of contributing to dissemination of women's writing to a bigger audience, it instead leads to muting the collective voice of Anglophone Cameroon female writers, to the extent the survival of the writings these women is threatened by extinction. The issue of the position of these women and their work in the literary poly system is elucidated in the research problem below.

### III. The Problem

Through a historical coincidence, Cameroon became a bilingual country with two languages which gave rise to two literary poly systems that exist in a relationship of binary juxtaposition. Thus, the ubiquitous writings in French of prolific female writers make the literary landscape of Cameroon a complex environment fraught with competition. Anglophone *écriture féminine* authors, who make up the minority class of writers, struggle to navigate the troubled waters of producing literature in a linguistically tense environment, where rejection is a possible outcome for their literary exploits. In fact, in Cameroon, marginalised Anglophone *écriture féminine* belongs to a grey area that Woolf (2002:180-191) refers to as the "third space" or the "in-between space." Hence, it is believed that if Anglophone female writers succeed in traversing the complexity, machismo and misogyny of publishers who hesitate to publish works by women in a minority language for fear that such efforts will be relegated to the ranks of forgotten volumes, they will be hindered by linguistic diversity and the tension it engenders.

This study, therefore, asked respondents to state their opinion about the following:

1. What is your opinion about the benefits of translation to Anglophone *écriture féminine* in Cameroon?
2. What is your opinion about the status of Anglophone *écriture féminine* in Cameroon and how can this be improved on?
3. What opinion do you hold about translation as a threat to the survival of Anglophone *écriture féminine* in Cameroon?

The study, whose aim is to answer the above questions by exploring the literary matrix of Cameroon, set out to meet the following three objectives:

1. Investigate the opinions of Anglophone *écriture féminine* writers about translation and how it can be beneficial to authors in Cameroon.
2. Assess opinions about the status of Anglophone *écriture féminine* literature and how this status can be upgraded.
3. Evaluate opinions about the threat of translation into French of Anglophone *écriture féminine* in Cameroon as a factor which mutes their voice and threatens the survival of their literature.

### IV. Conceptual Review

The conceptual review elucidates the key terms of this study, which are Anglophones or Anglophone women, *écriture féminine* writings, muting and dissemination, which are defined in the following paragraphs.

#### 4.1 Anglophone Women Writers

The term Anglophone refers to those who originate from the part of Cameroon that was formerly administered by Great Britain, who occupy 20% of the country (Ngoh 1979). However, in this study, anglophone women writers is not used only to refer to women whose sociological origin is from the former British colony, but to also include women from the French-speaking parts of Cameroon, who have studied in the anglophone sub-system of education and thus adopted English as their language of literacy and literature. Anglophone women's writings refer to *écriture féminine* works by female authors of who originate from the two English-speaking regions of Cameroon or who are writing in English.

#### 4.2 *Écriture Féminine*

The term *écriture féminine*, literally translated as 'feminine writing,' was originally coined by Cixous (1976), within the French feminist theory movement, to categorise a language or new genre of writing through which women could express themselves. Cixous (1976) assumes that when women write about women, they create a "female language" which exists as a counterpoint to "male language" which is used by most writers. Hence, feminine writing is one that is conceived from a female point of view. The term *écriture féminine* is used

in this work interchangeably with feminist literature, women's literature, and women's writings. Also, although in its broad sense the term does not exclude male writers, in this study, it applies only to the writings of female anglophone writers.

#### 4.3 Feminist Literature

Tuttle (1986:184) defines feminist literature as fictional or nonfictional narratives which support the feminist goals of defining, instituting, and advocating for equitable civil, political, economic, and social rights for women. To Wolf (2006:129-142), the concept denotes the "conception of writing with the aims of women's movements and political concerns." Furthermore, feminist literature usually emphasises the detrimental and undesirable effects of gender role differentials on women, men, families, communities, and societies. Feminist literature is the conscious writing of women, about women and for women (Wolf 2006:129-142). Feminist literature is based on the principles of feminism, which centre on women's efforts to be accepted as equals with men and change the way they are perceived in society. It seeks to redefine "Woman" differently from her traditional roles, to examine her mind and to understand her desires.

#### 4.4 Muting

Muting is a concept from social the media domain, which has been adapted to this study. The concept is used here to mean the act of silencing, toning down or subduing a writer's voice. In this context, muting is used to mean the act of silencing women's voice, such that their writing remains accessible only to a restricted audience. Muting, therefore, is also a way to curate the society's reading experience, to enable the dominant class to control what is read and what is not read at any point in time. The term is used in this study to refer to the use of structural barriers to literature to (consciously or unconsciously) prevent anglophone *écriture féminine* from being read (Kroløkke & Sorensen 2006:19-31).

#### 4.5 Dissemination

Dissemination means to spread, propagate, or give out information to a lot of people. In this study, dissemination is the act of making sure that a literary work is read by as many people as possible.

### V. Theoretical Framework

This study is underpinned by the Muted Group Theory, which was developed by Ardener and Ardener (1973:422-440). The theory, as applied to women's writing, is modified, and adapted to this study to investigate how translating Anglophone feminist writing into French (the language of the dominant co-culture) inhibits the way the marginal group (Anglophone women authors) express themselves through *écriture féminine* literature as a form of rhetoric. The theory is applied to identify the English language as a culture-specific means of defining and creating reality by Anglophone *écriture féminine* authors for their readers. Also, it is applied to study Anglophone *écriture féminine* authors and French authors as two distinct, though overlapping, circles of experience and interpretation, where the circle occupied by French authors converges with patriarchal societal norms that provide a dominant signature and overrides the circle occupied by Anglophone women authors and their translations, to the extent that the latter are either rendered invisible or they are not acknowledged, so that only a minor part of them or their reflections is exposed (Kroløkke & Sørensen 2006: 29-31). As a result, therefore, the Muted Group theory underpins this study which investigates how, translation has caused Anglophone *écriture féminine* authors' experiences to be relegated to mere "black holes" or reminiscences in the Cameroon literary poly system. It also investigates how women writers' views are narrowed by this "enforced tunnel vision," and their impact is not strongly felt in the literary milieu. Furthermore, it investigates how structural barriers prevent Anglophone *écriture féminine* authors from gaining prominence, because of translation mutes them and prevents their creative voice from being heard. Furthermore, the muted Group Theory is applied to investigate if Anglophone *écriture féminine* authors must translate their point of view into the dominant mode (French) or try alternate modes of communication, and if they end up being muted by the translation process and experience lack of literary satisfaction (Kroløkke & Sorensen 2006: 19-31).

In conclusion, even though the Muted Group Theory has been criticised for its rather generalised view of Anglophone *écriture féminine* authors' oppression in this study (it claims that all Anglophone *écriture féminine* authors are oppressed, while all translation into French mutes), its strength lies in the fact that it is applicable to investigating muting, as a phenomenon that is conditioned by variables such as ethnic origin, class, linguistic diversity, language minority, etc. The theory, therefore, is relevant to this study that investigates human subjects, that is, Anglophone *écriture féminine* authors, as well as to theoretical concepts such translation, bilingualism, linguistic identities, etc. (Kroløkke & Sorensen 2006:29-31).

### VI. Methodology

As part of the methodology, the research design, sampling method, data collection tools, types of data and data analysis tools are discussed.

### 6.1 Study Design

The research design is a mixed survey, which triangulates both qualitative and quantitative research tools and instruments. Quantitative research instruments are applied to the study to find answers to opinions about the benefits of translation, opinions about its status and opinions about the survival for Anglophone women writers in Cameroon. At the outcome of the quantitative analysis, data are represented using statistical tools. The research is also qualitative, given that it investigates opinions about the survival of Anglophone female writers. In the last section of the questionnaire, designed as an open-ended question, gives room for the subjects express their views without any intervention.

### 6.2 Sampling Method

The sampling method used is convenience sampling. It is applied as non-probability sampling method, through which twenty-one (21) female writers have intentionally been selected so that the desired number of subjects is included in the study population. Moreover, convenience sampling is used since it is the easiest way through which subjects could be recruited for the study, since female writers who can be readily available and willing to take part in such studies are few and far afield.

### 6.3 Data and Data Elicitation Procedures

Both primary and secondary data are used to carry out this investigation. Primary data are elicited from questionnaires, while secondary data are textual data collected through documentary research, from literature review of relevant writings. Documentary research is used as a data collection instrument to create a larger narrative of the issues under study from diverse perspectives.

A mixed questionnaire, which combines one open-ended question and fifteen closed-ended questions (with a five-point Likert scale), is administered to subjects for more flexibility, in terms of the questions asked and answers given. The questionnaire, which provides both quantitative and qualitative data, was administered face-to-face and by email.

### 6.4 Method of Data Analysis

To ensure the convergence of results from deductive text and numerical data, the study designs and conducts a mixed method of data analysis from two standpoints, the quantitative and the qualitative data. Quantitative data are analysed by generating nominal data from the questionnaires. Data collected from the close ended questions are first processed using the Excel Spread sheet, whereby, all participants' responses are coded and keyed in. Thereafter, the data from the close ended questions are exported into SPSS version 25 for further analysis. The data are analysed using descriptive statistics such as: frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Then, basic descriptive statistics are used to show evidence of opinions about the impact of translation on Anglophone Cameroon women's writing.

Data from the single open-ended question are analysed thematically analysed, using themes and quotations. Themes are the idea from statements that accurately captures or represents the main idea in the participant's direct statements or quotations. Lastly, findings are presented on frequency distribution and thematic tables. The qualitative analysis is carried out through descriptive or narrative accounts of the phenomenon under study. The advantage of this form of analysis is that the data are "grounded" in reality. Also, the details provided through description are rich and, therefore, open to many interpretations because they draw on the interpretive skills of the researcher.

### 6.5 Ethical Considerations

To guard against ethical issues in relation to this study, respondents were informed that the research was for purely academic purposes, and that the common criterion for selecting participants in this study is that they are all Anglophone écriture féminine writers from Cameroon. Also, they are informed that their responses in this questionnaire are entirely voluntary and they may refuse to answer any or all the questions if they feel uncomfortable. Moreover, they are informed that by agreeing to fill and return the questionnaire, they are giving their consent for their answers to be analysed and used in this research. Above all, they are reassured that all responses have been anonymised, and there is no way to trace their answers back to them. Lastly, they are told that they will not be receiving any remuneration in return for their time by agreeing to participate in this study. The researcher's email address is also included in the questionnaire to address any concerns or questions about respondents' rights as participants in this study.

### 6.6 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

The validity of instruments is ensured using close-ended questionnaires for data collection. These precise tools measure and elicit accurate responses and leave little room for respondents to digress from the required responses. Hence, both the data and instruments are reliable, given that they are consistent, as demonstrated by Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis, demonstrated on the table below:

**Table: One**

Reliability of the Questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	Based on	Variance	N of valid Items
Standardized Items			



**Table Three:**

Respondents' opinion on the Status of Anglophone Écriture Féminine Writing in Cameroon

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Std. Deviation
It is the underdog of the Cameroon literary poly system**	5 (23.8%)	6 (28.6%)	3 (14.3%)	4 (19.0%)	3 (14.3%)	1.93	1.390
It is a vibrant genre in its own right	11 (52.4%)	6 (28.6%)	2 (9.5%)	2 (9.5%)	0 (0.0%)	3.14	1.236
Translated works are part of national literature	8 (38.1%)	6 (28.6%)	6 (28.6%)	1 (4.8%)	0 (0.0%)	2.48	1.692
It is the driving force of the Cameroon literary scene	7 (33.3%)	4 (19.0%)	3 (14.3%)	4 (19.0%)	3 (14.3%)	2.43	1.469
It is not accessible to, or well-known by many Cameroonians**	7 (33.3%)	9 (42.9%)	4 (19.0%)	1 (4.8%)	0 (0.0%)	1.11	1.454
They are not marginalized by stakeholders of the literary milieu	5 (23.8%)	7 (33.3%)	3 (14.3%)	1 (4.8%)	5 (23.8%)	2.29	1.454
<b>Total Response</b>	<b>17</b> <b>(16.2%)</b>	<b>35</b> <b>(33.3%)</b>	<b>25</b> <b>(23.8%)</b>	<b>17</b> <b>(16.2%)</b>	<b>11</b> <b>(10.5%)</b>	2.23	1.445

\*\*Items with reversed coding during calculation of total response

Among the respondents, 49.5% do not think that the status of Anglophone écriture féminine in Cameroon is low, 26.7% think it is low, while 23.8% are neutral. The overall mean of 2.23, even below the cutoff point of 2.5 on a scale of 1-4, implies that the status of Anglophone écriture féminine writing is, indeed, low. Specifically, 76.2% (16) of the respondents argue that Anglophone écriture féminine writing is not accessible to, or well-known by many Cameroonians, while 4.8% (1) disagreed and 19.0% (4) remain neutral. Also, 52.4% (11) of respondents agree that Anglophone écriture féminine writing is the underdog of the Cameroon literary poly system while 33.3% (7) disagree and 14.3% (3) are neutral. On the contrary, a weak majority of respondents 52.3% (11) agree that Anglophone écriture féminine writing is the driving force of the Cameroon literary scene, while 33.3% (7) disagreed and 14.3% (3) are neutral. Also, another weak majority of respondents 57.1% (12) attest that Anglophone écriture féminine writers are not marginalized by stakeholders of the literary milieu, while 28.6% (6) say that they are marginalized and 14.3% (3) are neutral. Nevertheless, 66.7% (14) of respondents agree that translated works are part of national literature, while 28.6% (6) appear neutral. Lastly, on a positive note, most of the respondents 81.0% (17) confirm that it is a vibrant genre in its own right, while 9.5% (2) disagree and another 9.5% (2) are neutral.

### 7.3 What opinion do you hold about translation as a threat to the survival of Anglophone écriture féminine in Cameroon.

**TableFour:**

Respondents' opinion on Translation as a Threat to the Survival of Anglophone Écriture Féminine Writing

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Std. Deviation
They are not well-known by readers of literature	6 (28.6%)	9 (42.9%)	3 (14.3%)	2 (9.5%)	1 (4.8%)	2.97	1.354
They are muted/silenced by translation	4 (19.0%)	7 (33.3%)	6 (28.6%)	3 (14.3%)	1 (4.8%)	2.42	1.546
They will perish if their works are not translated into French	4 (19.0%)	5 (23.8%)	7 (33.3%)	2 (9.5%)	3 (14.3%)	2.21	1.601
Translation into French is the only key to their survival	2 (9.5%)	7 (33.3%)	3 (14.3%)	6 (28.6%)	3 (14.3%)	2.32	1.221
Without translation, they cannot survive from their art	1 (4.8%)	7 (33.3%)	6 (28.6%)	4 (19.0%)	3 (14.3%)	1.91	1.347
<b>Total Response</b>	<b>17</b> <b>(16.2%)</b>	<b>35</b> <b>(33.3%)</b>	<b>25</b> <b>(23.8%)</b>	<b>17</b> <b>(16.2%)</b>	<b>11</b> <b>(10.5%)</b>	2.37	1.414



In aggregate, 49.5% of respondents almost half (50.0%) agree that translation is a threat to the survival of Anglophone écriture féminine writing in Cameroon, while only 26.7% disagree and 23.8% are neutral. The overall mean value of 2.37 although below the 2.5 on a scale of 1-4 still reveals that translation is a significant threat. Specifically, 71.5% (15) of respondents agree that Anglophone écriture féminine writing is not well-known by readers of literature, while 14.3% (3) disagreed and another 14.3% (3) are neutral. Moreover, 52.3% (11) of respondents confirm that Anglophone écriture féminine writers are muted by translation while 19.1% (4) disagreed and 28.6% (6) neutral. On an equal note, 42.9% (9) of respondents agree that Anglophone écriture féminine writing will perish if their works are not translated into French and agree that translation into French is the only key to their survival, while 33.3% (7) disagreed and 14.3% (3) are neutral. Lastly, 38.1% (8) of respondents agree that without translation, they cannot live on their art, while 33.3% (7) disagreed and 28.6% (6) remain neutral.

**Table Five:**

Opinions on Opinions of Respondents on how Écriture Féminine Writers can Protect themselves as a Group

Themes	Responses/Quotations
Create association	<p>“Through an association of écriture féminine writers.”</p> <p>Create an association through which they can regulate the translation of their writings.”</p> <p>“By creating an association through which their rights will be protected.”</p> <p>“Create an association of Anglophone écriture féminine writers to advocate for the rights of authors of translated literature.”</p> <p>“By Creating a strong association.”</p> <p>“By creating an association that will protect their rights as minority authors.”</p> <p>‘Create an Anglophone écriture féminine writers’ professional association to protect their literature.”</p>
Build strong network	<p>“By building a strong network of écriture féminine writers to defend their rights and be a strong watchdog of their literary polysystem.”</p> <p>“Creating a strong network of anglophone écriture féminine writers.”</p> <p>“By forming a network of Anglophone écriture féminine writers and putting voices together to speak in favour of translated literature.”</p>
Institute policies	<p>“Put in place proper policies to protect their rights as authors of translated works.”</p> <p>“Creating an écriture féminine guild to advocate for our rights.”</p> <p>“Have a code of ethics that must be strictly applied by translators of écriture féminine literature.”</p>
Control of translation	<p>“Advocate for publishers of translated écriture féminine literature to control translators’ choices of especially macro-strategies.”</p> <p>“By having a say in the way their works are translated which will ensure that translations still reflect their original intentions.”</p>
Implement in secondary and high school curriculum	<p>“Putting these books on secondary and high school curricular which will make écriture féminine authors and their works popular.”</p>
Educating the population	<p>“Anglophone écriture féminine authors need to make others develop a grounded understanding of the importance of their work within national literary polysystems.”</p>
Resist translated works	<p>“By resisting the translation of their literary works.”</p>
Developed interest in translation	<p>“By taking an interest in translation endeavours, especially when they are spearheaded by publishers or other stakeholders.”</p>
Awareness creation	<p>“Raise awareness about the rights of authors of translated écriture féminine literature”</p>

The respondent’s opinion on ways to protect écriture féminine writers as a group are organised into nine categories. Many of the respondents claim that an association should be created as narrated in some statements “...By creating an association that will protect their rights as minority authors...”, “... Create an Anglophone female writers’ professional association to protect their literature...”, “... Create an association of Anglophone female writers to advocate for the rights of authors of translated literature...” Also, many of the respondents add that a strong network should be built as depicted in some statements “...By building a strong network of female writers to defend their rights and be a strong watchdog of their literary poly system...”

To further elucidate their point, some proposed that policies should be implemented to protect authors’ rights as narrated “... Put in place proper policies to protect their rights as authors of translated works...”. Some equally proposed that translation should be control as depicted in the statement “... Advocate for publishers of translated écriture féminine literature to control translators’ choice of especially macro-strategies...” A few of respondents also proposed that the population should be educated by the female writers as narrated “... ”

Anglophone écriture féminine authors need to make others develop a grounded understanding of the importance of their work within national literary polystems...” Lastly, a few of respondents suggested that there is need to: raise awareness about the rights of authors of translated écriture féminine literature, resist the translation of their literary works by unscrupulous publishers, take an interest in translation endeavours, especially when they are spearheaded by publishers or other stakeholders who may not have their best interests at heart and put these books on secondary and high school curricular so that Anglophone écriture féminine authors and their works can be made popular.

In summary, therefore, from the data analysis above, although écriture féminine authors in Cameroon opine that translation is highly beneficial to them, they believe that their original writings occupy a low status as compared to those of French authors. Furthermore, they hold the opinion that their survival is threatened by translation and a majority proposed creating a strong network of anglophone écriture féminine writers to advocate for their rights and protect their literature. The findings are in line with Venuti’s(2013:116) assertion that translation is considered “an act of violence against the nation” because identity is a foundation of nationalism, which is in turn grounded on similarity. Similarity, on its part, is biologically supported by ethnicity and expressed through language and culture. Therefore, to these writers, translating écriture féminine is an “aggression,” a “penetration,” an “incorporation” (Steiner 1998:319), through which the translator ensures that the text and its author are transported, dressed in new clothes and taught to speak a new language (Steiner 1975:73).As Parker (1999:330) contends, “survival depends on a non-reproductive appreciation of diversity and complexity.”

### VIII. Conclusion

To conclude, it is worthy to recall that across the world nowadays, only a small majority of readers can speak or read more than one or two languages. Hence, literature can neither be conceptualised, nor can it exist without translation. Therefore, translation enables the international dissemination of literary texts and enriches world literature. As such, minority literatures have no choice but to incorporate translation into their major counterparts to explore the possibilities of cultural exchange (Venuti 2013:194).In fact, to buttress this point, Tyulenev (2014:30) contends that translation plays a major role in cultural processes as a mechanism for introducing new elements into culture and perpetrating existing social orders. That is why Anglophone écriture féminine authors and their readers ought to embrace translation for its positive virtues and ignore the part of it that they believe is detrimental to their writings.

Indeed, as Lefevre (1992:18) surmises, translation enriches target culture national literature, although widening the target language horizon in this way will not be appreciated by the beneficiaries in the beginning, for they will be tempted to rebel against translation. Hence, to Tyulenev (2013:193), the study of complex relations between writers, their societies and their cultures or languages brings us to the relationship between “action” and “system” which is a difficult balance to obtain. Inequality is a systemic issue that even the best of intentions cannot resolve. Indeed, most systems take time to warm up to actions whose benefits are not immediately perceived. Perhaps, 50 years down the line, Anglophone écriture féminine writers will appreciate what translation has added to their writing that they cannot appreciate in the present.No one can predict the interpretation that is given to translate écritureféminine, because stakeholders are fragmented into diverse cultures characterised by different and often conflicting values.

Translating écriture féminine should incorporate interpreting the symbolism of the Anglophone women writers’ literature, so that it will not be lost or ignored by the dominant point of view. Karajagdiu and Mrasori (2021:2332) argue that literary translation can replace and strengthen original genres and elevate national literature, deepen or refine readers’ artistic, aesthetic, literary ideas, and tastes, as well as lead to advancement of national literature. Admittedly, in a multilingual society such as Cameroon, translation plays an invaluable role by mediating between existing co-cultures. Hence, it is not possible to avoid translation in a multicultural context where literatures are fragmented through translations and even adaptations before they are carried to other cultures. Hence, Anglophone écriture féminine writers need to act not only in ways which will enable readers appreciate their diversity, but also in manners which will make them more desirable to lovers of literature both within and beyond their immediate linguistic community.

Indeed, the translation anglophone écriture féminine in Cameroon needs what Godayol (2011:122) terms “symbolic mothers” who will translate this literature not only to “eat them up” but to guarantee a deeper understanding and wellbeing of these writings. It needs actions which will incorporate their work into the Cameroon reading culture, to ensure that translated Anglophone écriture féminine writers will take their rightful place as equal partners within the literary poly system. Through translation, Anglophone women’s personal experiences can be brought into the public domain, such that they can tell their story to the rest of the world. However, women’s experiences cannot escape being victimised during the translation, given that translation opens avenues for their world view to be de-fragmented and de-membered and their identities manipulated and/or deconstructed (Godayol 2011).

To conclude, in line with Von Flotow's (1998:4) assertion that diverse and complex societies change into a form of productive progress due to a positive criticism, and given that mainstream feminist translation studies has moved well beyond issues of minority struggles, Anglophone *écriture féminine* writers should instead use translation to subvert the patriarchal hegemony exercised by the French language, focus on recovering Anglophone women's "lost" works, and assert their identity as writers by revising their rhetoric to adopt the model of literary aesthetics and quality of writing that will be appealing even when it is translated into French. What Anglophone *écriture féminine* needs is what Godayol (2011:122) terms "feminine affinity" or faithfulness in the relationship between authors and translators and loyalty in social relations between the stakeholders, even though loyalty is a more difficult affinity to fulfil.

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*Tanyitiku Enaka Agbor Bayee, PhD*

*Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters University of Buea*