

# ANGLOPHONE CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT IN FRANCOPHONE COUNTRIES: THE CASE OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE

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## Résumé

*Cette étude consiste à voir dans quelles mesures la culture Anglophone pourrait constituer une aubaine pour le développement d'un Etat francophone comme la Côte d'Ivoire. Pour ce faire, l'avis de 37 enseignants d'Anglais du secondaire sur la question a été recueilli. Les résultats de l'étude prouvent que la culture anglaise peut effectivement jouer un rôle déterminant dans le développement des Etats francophones comme la Côte d'Ivoire si elle était bien promue auprès de la jeunesse à travers l'éducation et les médias et même sur internet. En effet, cette culture repose sur des valeurs fortes comme le pragmatisme, l'esprit d'entrepreneuriat et la polyvalence qui sont des vecteurs clés de développement.*

**Mots clés :** Anglophone, Culture, Développement, Francophone, Pays.

## Abstract

*This work aims at checking the extent to which the Anglophone culture can represent an opportunity of development for a francophone country like Côte d'Ivoire. To reach this goal, the opinions of 37 Ivorian English teachers from secondary school have been investigated. The data provided by this survey prove that the Anglophone culture can play a potential role in the process of development of francophone countries like Côte d'Ivoire if it is well-promoted at school, through media and internet. In fact, this culture is based on some strong values such as pragmatism, entrepreneurial-mindset, and polyvalence which are key factors of development.*

**Keywords:** Anglophone, Country, Culture, Development, Francophone.

## Introduction

The former Francophone colonies of West-Africa like Côte d'Ivoire keep on aspiring to 'emergence' the very starting point of development. Unfortunately, they remain faced with some challenges like the socio-economic integration because of the gap between education and the world of work. Indeed, the educational system within the French speaking countries in West-Africa is mostly based on theory. Contrarily, the Anglophone model promotes key cultural values such as entrepreneurial-mindset, pragmatism, and fighting-spirit which are advantageous for any process development. It is difficult to envisage development without having a glance at such a culture. In this perspective, Maraña (2010, p.4) stipulates that: "Culture is the be all and end all of development". Put simply, both are closely interwoven.

In addition, some scholars like Georgette (1983), and Alyasery (2018) establish a very tiny link between language and culture. Brock-Utne (2005, p.2) even defines language as culture expressing itself in sound. In other terms, language is the verbal instrument through which culture is manifested. Thus, there is no culture without language and vice-versa. Accordingly, the Anglophone culture can be as useful as the English language which is known as the global language in the frame of development.

This work aims at finding answers to the following research question: to what extent can the Anglophone culture contribute to development in a Francophone country like Côte d'Ivoire? This general research question can be split into subsidiary ones that are: what language policy can be implemented in Côte d'Ivoire to enable the Anglophone culture contribute effectively to the process of development? Can curriculum based on Anglophone culture represent an asset for development in Côte

d'Ivoire? Can the promotion of the Anglophone culture in the Ivorian medias and through internet accelerate the process of development of the country? From the current topic, it can be hypothesized that the Anglophone culture can contribute effectively to the process of development of Francophone countries like Côte d'Ivoire.

## **1. Interconnexion between the anglophone culture and development.**

### **1.1. Anglophone Culture and its Characteristics**

For Mishkin (2006, p.131), cultural globalization to the full extent, is the effective driver for expanding the American dream around the world. It has become a very powerful weapon to force the poor and developing countries into the range of cultures, markets and power of America That is, the Americans have exported all over the world, their culture which works hard to better human lives.

In the same perspective, Oha (2008, p.70) argues that:

Americanization is mainly a transformation of cultural identity, which may result from an admiration of American civilization and subjectivity or from a circumstantial imperative to conform to American lifestyle so as to benefit more meaningfully from what America offers. The first case mainly applies to individuals outside the U.S., who may want to reinvent their identities with the assumption that the American is the new, desirable citizen of the world. The second, on the other hand, seems to apply mainly to individuals who have already found themselves under U.S. influence and have no choice but to accept American norms of behavior (Oha, 2008, p.70).

Thus, many people around the world are influenced by the American ways of doing things in order to benefit from the numerous advantages offered by US, as the world leader. They can therefore profit from the opportunities offered not only by the US government but also from that of the American multinationals. Biressi et al (2013, p.8) referring to British, state that:

Let our children grow tall and some grow taller than others, if they have it in them to do so. They work hard to earn more to make a better life for one's family on one's own terms; nothing could be simpler or more appealing as a political philosophy for those who were well-equipped or who were determined enough to take it on board or who felt that they deserved a larger slice of the cake.

Indeed, values like 'hard-work' through fighting-spirit, courage and entrepreneurial-mindset are promoted within the British population. Konan (2019, p.120) adds that "more than 60% of U.S colleges and universities offer at least one course in entrepreneurship to facilitate the development of entrepreneurial intention of their students and gain entrepreneurial experience during their youngest ages". In other terms, the majority of the American educational institutions promote entrepreneurial-mindset.

By the same token, for Weaver (1997, p.7) one of the worst insults in America is to suggest that someone depends upon or relies upon others. When we help others, it is often done indirectly or circuitously through anonymous charities, but seldom directly because it would offend the receivers. The author goes further arguing that, success in the U.S. is the sweetest if it is individual success and based upon hard work and

action. Furthermore, American heroes are always individualists who accomplish whatever they do in life through action. There is no politician who would say “vote for me because of my family and all the important people I know.” Almost every politician in the U.S. portrays himself or herself as some sort of Abraham Lincoln, a self-made man who grew up in poverty and became President through his own efforts without help from others (Weaver, 1997, p.6).

Murray (2010, p. 147) thinks that, it matters greatly if leaders signal that innovation matters. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt was an exemplar by saying publicly that he wanted to see experimentation, and sometimes failure, in order to solve public problems. Support from top officials is as important as from politicians. The UK government’s top 200 civil servants spent their annual retreat in 2009 focused on innovation as a clear signal from their head that the agenda matters. Besides, Oakland (2001, p.19) says that, Britain’s long agricultural history includes a series of farming revolutions from Neolithic times. That is, the British can share their long experience in agriculture with Côte d’Ivoire where agriculture is the backbone of the local economy. In short, a developing Francophone country like Côte d’Ivoire can benefit from this enormous cultural knowledge and know-how of the Anglophones in the course of development.

## **1.2. Relevance of Anglophone Culture in Development**

For Brooker (2018), English is now considered critical for national participation in the globalized economy. It is a means of providing individuals with access to knowledge, skills and employment opportunities, as well as social mobility. As a result, investment in the English language education is increasing worldwide as Ministries of Education, schools and universities seek to maximize the economic, social, cultural and

political returns of the English language proficiency. As the major global language for communication, English is linked to economic value through the opportunities it brings for employment and entrepreneurialism, alongside a range of socio-cultural and political benefits realized by facilitating international mobility and communications. In this context, for development to take place, the use of English is highly recommended. The anglophone culture can be as important for development as the English language because language and culture are strictly interrelated. Language is perceived as the cradle of the members of a given cultural background that impacts on their ways of conceiving the human society. It is the means of expression of one's cultural behavior. Language can also be considered a 'repository of cultural identity' that shapes one's perceptions and beliefs (Plonsky, 2013, p.19).

For Herath (2017, p.6) Management practices that are favored in the U.S. such as employee participation, individual responsibility, merit-based rewards, and short-term approaches, are not applicable to some countries that are culturally different from the U.S. A mismatch between work, management practices and national culture is likely to reduce company performance. "The greater the difference in values the U.S is from the company's home country cultural means; the company will need to adapt that much more". Besides, Wood et al (2006, p.27) says that: "In Britain, the tradition of creativity and enterprise among minorities is deeply rooted". That is to say, the culture of creativity and enterprise is highly developed within the British population. This has certainly led to industrial revolution in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the same vein, Prasad (2007) considers that:

It is interesting to investigate the British model of unprecedented full-scale privatization since 1989. The authors of the England & Wales study, John Sawkins and Valerie Dickie, argue that one

of the reasons for privatization was the belief that the private sector could deliver services in a more efficient and effective way than the public sector provided, there was appropriate economic regulation (Prasad, 2007, p. 20).

In fact, the British put the stress on the privatization instead of the public sector just to improve the quality of the daily services. The companies which invest much money in a given economic sector, strictly do their uppermost to prevent any lacks so as to make profits. Tittenbrun (2015, p.1) thinks that: “The American Dream is supposed to mean that through hard work and perseverance, even the poorest people can make it to middle class or above” (Tittenbrun, 2015, p. 1). In this context, through determination, and courage, the American people can transform a desert into a paradise. Thanks to their self-sacrificing mentality, they can not only bridge any chasm, but also keep on dominating the rest of the world. Moreover, Weaver (1999:8) stipulates that:

If you encounter an American at a party, he or she will often greet you in the following way: “Hello, my name is Gary Weaver. I’m a professor at American University. What do you do? We identify ourselves in terms of what we do. People from many other cultures identify themselves in terms of who they are. An East African might greet you by saying, “Hello. I’m Amos Ntimama, the son of William Ole Ntimama, from Narok in the Masai Mara.” The primary source of his identity is who he is – his father and his birthplace. Status is based upon family and heritage, not what he does as an individual (Weaver, 1999, p.8).

That is, the first identity of the Americans remains their profession or what they do in life. Indeed, they are always proud to work hard in order to contribute to the nation-building. Contrary, in Francophone developing countries like Côte d'Ivoire, an individual identifies himself with whether his father, birthplace, family or heritage instead of their own socio-professional status. This largely symbolizes their sense of laziness and lack of ambition. Lastly, Johnson (1965, p.3) underlines that in these days, the American Dream continues to place a heavy emphasis upon economic prosperity and financial security, along with other ambitions as well-finding and pursuing a rewarding career, leading a healthy and personally fulfilling life, and being able to retire in comfort. But regardless of the time or place, America has always been about the hope and promise of a good life which can inspire the Ivorians in their quest for development.

## 2. Methodology

This work is a case study in a descriptive perspective. A quantitative method of data collection through a questionnaire has been applied to 37 teachers of English from secondary school of Bouaké to find out the relevance of the Anglophone culture in the process of development in Francophone countries like Côte d'Ivoire. This questionnaire in only one part is made up of four (04) close questions. From August 17<sup>th</sup> to August, 20<sup>th</sup>, I went to four secondary schools of Bouaké of that are, Lycée Classique Bouaké, Lycée Municipal Djibo Sounkalo Bouaké and Collège Moderne Jeunes Filles Bouaké to submit the questionnaire to the participants. All the distributed questionnaires have been collected without a problem. They were all correctly filled in.

The informants have been randomly selected in the Bouaké educational zone. The teachers of English have been chosen because their mastery of the Anglophone world not only



as former learners, but also as teachers now, allows them to be very imbued with it, especially its culture which is based on key values like entrepreneurial-mindset, pragmatism, and fighting-spirit. At university for instance, from the 1st year on, they have been taught Anglophone civilization of the The teachers of English also use didactic materials such as books and novels by Anglophone writers who depict their social habits. As the teachers of English form part of the few users of English in Côte d'Ivoire, they are more familiar to the Anglophones foreigners residing or coming in Côte d'Ivoire. They are therefore equipped enough to check the pertinence of the Anglophone culture in the process of development of a developing francophone state like Côte d'Ivoire.

The very first question put to the respondents, is related to the main values which characterize Ivorians. The second question is devoted to the main features of the Anglophone culture. The third question is about the place of the Anglophone culture in development within a Francophone country like Côte d'Ivoire. The very last question is related to the suggestions made by secondary school teachers to let Ivorians adopt effectively the Anglophone culture.

The basic theories to enlighten the connection between the Anglophone culture and development in the Ivorian multilingual setting remain language planning and Sapir Worlf-Hypothesis. In fact, the Ivorian linguistic map is a very diversified one in which local, second and foreign languages have coexisted for decades. Therefore, any language policy promoting the Anglophone culture in Côte d'Ivoire where the English language is relegated to the second rank, requires a prior language planning which aims at reconsidering the status of all the other languages. As to the Sapir-Worlf Hypothesis, it establishes a tiny link between language and culture. This theory can let the stakeholders revise the curriculum in order to accord

more interest to Anglophone culture in the course of the English language teaching. Given that, this paper is a quantitative one, the data are accordingly presented, analyzed and interpreted.

### 3. Presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data

All the data collected in the course of this research are quantitative ones because they are provided by the questionnaire. The respondents have been offered the opportunity to give their position about the use of the Anglophone culture in the process development of a Francophone developing state like Côte d’Ivoire. The very first data of this research are about the main cultural values which best characterize Ivorians in their daily-life.

#### a. Data about the Main Cultural Values Characterizing the Ivorians.

Table 1:

<b>Question 1:</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Absolute value</b>	<b>Relative value</b>
Among these cultural values, which ones do best characterize the Ivorians?	Pragmatism	<b>01</b>	<b>2.70%</b>
	Laziness	<b>33</b>	<b>89.18%</b>
	Bureaucracy	<b>37</b>	<b>100%</b>

In this table, it can be noticed that, 37 respondents corresponding to 100% consider that, think that Ivorians are only interested in bureaucracy. About 89.18% think that Ivorians are lazy in general. Only one (01) of the informants which represents 2.70% advocates that Ivorians are also pragmatic

These findings reveal, it can be drawn that, all the participants consider that the Ivorians in general, are endowed with the culture of bureaucracy which derives from the colonial

system. In fact, the French colonizers who have for a long time been the source of inspiration of the colonized people, were missionaries and civil-servants. Thus, the French model has been imposed in all the French colonies for decades. From now on, bureaucracy seems to form part of the Ivorians social habits. This situation has been worsened by the current educational system which is also a colonial legacy. Unfortunately, this system of formation based on theory, still persists. Accordingly, the rate of joblessness is growing in scale in Côte d'Ivoire because learners do not succeed in getting jobs after completing their academic studies. Yet, there is a need in manpower, especially in the private sector which requires much more practicality and proficiency. Hence, there is a gap between the current life and formation in the Ivorian context. The position of the informants shows that the teachers of English are even bored with the system that they are in charge of. In this context, it would be nice to take into account their point of view so as to solve this alarming question. Therefore, the stakeholders must take some courageous decisions to improve the current educational system which provides both the private and public sectors with human resources. Thus, the chasm between the world of life and education can be bridged.

Almost all respondents assimilate Ivorians to laziness because all of the Ivorian students prefer applying for jobs in the public services after the studies. The laziness that they are accused of, seems to be a lack of proficiency. Indeed, the majority of them are not proficient because of the formation they benefit from. There is also the fact that they are not prepared socially, psychologically, and educationally to entrepreneurial-mindset. Many young Ivorians consider the job opportunities in the informal sector as temporary jobs.

The only respondent who defends the position that, the Ivorians are also pragmatic argues that, no one is born

pragmatic. Pragmatism is cultural and educational. Hence, the Anglophones are more pragmatic because their society prepares children for that. Once the system of formation is based on values like pragmatism, the Ivorian students can be more practical at the end of their studies. This participant thinks that the issue of development goes beyond the cultural factor to integrate the political, economic and academic ones. Therefore, it would be nice to have an overview of the Anglophone culture.

### **b. Data about the main Characteristics of the Anglophone Culture**

Table 2:

<b>Question 2:</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Absolute value</b>	<b>Relative value</b>
Among the following cultural values, which ones do best characterize the Anglophones?	Entrepreneurial-mindset	<b>37</b>	<b>100%</b>
	Polyvalence	<b>37</b>	<b>100%</b>
	Waste of time	<b>00</b>	<b>00%</b>

In this table, it can be remarked that 37 respondents, corresponding 100% think that, the Anglophone culture is based on entrepreneurial-mindset and polyvalence whereas no one assimilates it to a “waste of time”.

All the respondents point out that, the Anglophone culture is based on entrepreneurial-mindset and polyvalence. That is, they are well-informed about the anglophone world. These values were taught to the Anglophone colonies during colonization because the British colonizers were farmers and traders. After independence, the former colonized people were already endowed with the key values that are entrepreneurial-

mindset, polyvalence, pragmatism and fighting-spirit. Every day, the Anglophones namely Nigerians, and Ghanaians who live in Côte d'Ivoire prove that there is no lazy job. These anglophone foreigners do any jobs that can produce money, as they are polyvalent. Ivorians should duplicate this social model to settle the challenge of socio-professional insertion. It gives anyone the opportunity to take part in the process of national development in a way or another.

**c. Data about the Pertinence of the Anglophone Culture in the Development of Côte d'Ivoire.**

Table 3:

<b>Question 1:</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Relative value</b>	<b>Absolute value</b>
What is the relevance of the Anglophone culture in the development of Côte d'Ivoire in the immediate future?	Useless	<b>02</b>	<b>05.40%</b>
	Useful	<b>35</b>	<b>94.60%</b>
	Total	<b>37</b>	<b>100%</b>

It can be observed on this board that, for 35 informants, corresponding to 94.60%, the Anglophone culture can foster development in Côte d'Ivoire in the immediate future. Contrarily, 02 interviewees representing 5.40% of the participants think that it is not relevant in the Ivorian context.

From these data, it can be concluded that quite all the respondents acknowledge that the Anglophone culture can be a factor of development because it focuses some key cultural values such as entrepreneurial-mindset, pragmatism, and fighting-spirit. Contrary to the French speaking nations like Côte d'Ivoire, education in Anglophone countries, is based on

professional systems from nursery school to university. This formation offers learners the possibility to benefit from some practical trainings in the course of their studies. It therefore lets them develop interest in the informal sector which is a cradle of socio-economic, as craftsmen.

Lastly, there are 5.40% of the informants who deem it pointless for whom, it is useless to implement the Anglophone culture in Côte d'Ivoire in the frame of development. They advocate that, since colonization, Côte d'Ivoire is already familiar with the French culture which has been a major driver of the development in France. It can also let Côte d'Ivoire reach development over time. They find it risky to get rid of the French culture that forms part of the local social habits from now on, for that of English. This can even prevent Côte d'Ivoire from spending much money in the promotion of another culture. For the Anglophone culture to contribute to development in Francophone countries, a number of proposals have been made.

#### **d. Suggestions to Promote Anglophone Culture in Côte d'Ivoire.**

Table 4:

<b>Question 4</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Relative value</b>	<b>Absolute value</b>
What suggestions can you make so as to promote Anglophone culture in Côte d'Ivoire ?	The fully integration of Anglophone culture in the curriculum	<b>35</b>	<b>94.60%</b>
	Promotion of Anglophone culture in media and through internet	<b>35</b>	<b>94.60%</b>
	Total	<b>70</b>	<b>100%</b>

From this table, it can be remarked that 94.60% of the participants are for the promotion of the Anglophone culture at school, in Media and through internet in Côte d'Ivoire. As for them, it is necessary to integrate the Anglophone culture to the school curriculum because English is restricted into classroom. It can therefore be promoted through the English classes. As the major means of communication, media and internet help change the mentality of young generation. As a whole, the entire population of the country can be taught the Anglophone values through education, media and internet in order to change their attitude towards the professional world.

#### **4. Summary of the findings and discussion**

This study shows that the Anglophone culture can play a key role in the process of development of Côte d'Ivoire. As regard globalization, the English language has imposed itself through time as the global language par excellence by investing all the key socio-economic domains. This domination of the world' system of communication by English is due to the strong cultural values, it is based on. In fact, language and culture are strictly interconnected as stipulated by Alyasery (2018, p.8). Despite the francophone status of Côte d'Ivoire, the participants in this research think that the Anglophone culture is more adapted to face the socio-economic challenges that the country is confronted with. The professional feature of the Anglophone educational system can allow to improve that of Côte d'Ivoire where the current one favors laziness, and joblessness, given that it is highly based on theory.

All of the participants in this work stipulate that bureaucracy is proper to Ivorians in general. This philosophy of the real-life society has been taught to them by colonizers. The French culture is mainly responsible for the numerous challenges related to the socio-professional integration of young men in the sense that it does not favor much risk-taking. This

position is shared by Brian (1991, p.7) when arguing that the most coveted jobs are those with the State bureaucracy where job security is legendary, where one can become safe to lead a comfortable life. All France lives by the administration of the bureaucracy; all live by laws, directives, decrees,' rules, guidelines, etc. They all delineate and render more certain day to day living. Any bureaucrat, great or small, grasps his/her parcel of power within the niche and is protected from below and from above by the rules.

All of the informants advocate that the Anglophone culture is made up of key values like pragmatism and entrepreneurial-mindset. They agree with the view that the Anglophones are courageous because for them 'time is money'. They work hard as much as possible to better their own life. This conception is also defended by Halliwell (2007, p.14) for whom, we [are] told in the same breath that Americans are optimistic (a trait of temperament), that they attach great value to productive activity (a trait of character). By the same token, Wood et al (2006, p.42) point out that, Innovation is crucial for all British cities in order to survive and prosper. This is almost a commonplace of current economic thinking, but the way in which innovation is generally conceived is far too narrow and constricting. 'Innovation' inspires a vision of gleaming glass and titanium boxes in out-of-town sites filled with advanced technologists making stunning breakthroughs in a new branch of genetics or nanotechnology; or perhaps a team of chilled creative software designers in a downtown loft conversion – and so it often is. But there is so much more to the process. Innovation, to paraphrase Peter Hall, is the process by which cities solve the problems they have created for themselves. This conception is shared by Lisa (2017, p.5) who conceives the American dream as the capacity of an individual to be prosperous through his work, courage, and determination.



Almost all of the informants have pointed out that the Anglophone culture is more propitious for development than the French one that Ivorians are endowed with. In this perspective, Lambert (1970) finds that when people spoke in Canadian-style French, they were rated by both Francophones and Anglophones as less intelligent, less dependable, less kind, and less ambitious than when they spoke in standard Canadian English. In other words, the personalities of French speakers were perceived less favorably than were the personalities of English speakers. Besides, Tittenbrun (2015, p.2) “the American Dream is supposed to mean that through hard work and perseverance, even the poorest people can make it to middle class or above”. As a whole, the Anglophone culture can be advantageous for the process of a Francophone developing country like Côte d’Ivoire.

## Conclusion

This research highlights the pertinence of the Anglophone culture in the process of development in Côte d’Ivoire. A quantitative method of data collection has been implemented to gather the views of English teachers from secondary school about this query. It has permitted to respond to the research question. The hypothesis has also been verified. In fact, the main findings of the study show that 100% of the respondents think that Ivorians are all interested in bureaucracy while 89.19% of them argue that Ivorians are lazy in general. Moreover, 100% of the participants estimate that the Anglophone culture is based on values like entrepreneurial-mindset, and polyvalence. Accordingly, 94.60% of the informants acknowledge that the Anglophone culture can be a cradle of development in Côte d’Ivoire as against 05.40%. To reach this goal, 94.60% of the participants have suggested the promotion of the Anglophone culture through the current educational system, media and internet so

as to sensitize the young generation about its relevance in development.

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