

THE USE OF UNSTATED ASSUMPTIONS BY THE EMERGING CHURCHES IN BUEA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the use of “unstated assumptions” by the emerging Christian churches as a means of implicitly communicating their worth to the public. The data come from 40 churches located in various areas of the Buea municipality, with a greater concentration found in the university quarter of Molyko. From the coinages of these new churches to the appellation of their promoters (leaders); from their slogans to their New Year prophetic messages; from their evangelisation messages to their conference/crusade themes, there is clear evidence of implicit communication. To elucidate the above assertion, publicity banners, evangelisation and conference/seminar stickers and flyers, and church calendars (which often carry New Year messages) were assembled with the help of 15 research assistants and analysed thematically. To further heighten the idea of the use of covert communication by emerging churches, allusion was made to the mainstream churches with respect to how they are called, how they conceive their church programmes, how they present their seminar and evangelisation themes, etc. The framework used for the study was the interpretive communication model. It was found that these emerging churches use this implicit mode of communication to lure adherents of the traditional churches as well as to attract prospective followers especially as the written texts usually carry promises of healing, deliverance, breakthrough, prosperity, fertility, protection, etc. Curiously, it was found that some mainstream churches such as the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC) and Roman Catholic Church (RCC) through her Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) now use this same mode of communication.

Keywords: Emerging Churches, Implicit Communication, Mainstream Churches, Buea-Cameroon.

Introduction

A keen look at the different communication modes in the emerging churches within the Buea municipality reveals a great deal of the use of unstated assumptions. From the names given to these emerging churches, to the appellations of their founders and promoters; from the way their evangelisation flyers, stickers, banners, and church magazines are conceived, it is clear that they depend greatly on silent communication. Talking about names, Kouega (2018:01) says, “for some years, a number of Pentecostal churches in Cameroon have changed their

names, adopting new names that usually contained globalising terms like “all nations”, “global”, “international”, “universal”, “world”. The purpose of the present study is to attempt an interpretation of the various elements of this non-verbal and silent mode of communication with the aim of establishing the rationale for its use. This is particularly so as people sometimes assume the communication method you choose in any given situation is a reflection of what you think of them and the level of importance you assign to the message. The work is divided into four sections labelled: background to the study, review of literature, methodology and, lastly, analysis and discussion. These are considered in turn.

Background to the study

The notions of emerging churches vis a vis mainstream churches and the modes of communication in the emerging churches are considered in turn. Emerging churches, also understood in the context of this paper as Pentecostal churches, came to Cameroon after independence in the 1960 (Kouega 2018:02; Kuate and Ndokuo 2020:137). Actually, Buea is the headquarters of the South West Region of Cameroon. As an administrative unit, this region belongs to the Anglophone part of Cameroon which is adjacent to neighbouring Nigeria from where Pentecostalism was diffused in the Cameroonian territory (Akoko, 2007). Thanks to this geographical proximity with Nigeria, Buea – like other major towns of the former British Southern Cameroons which were administered from Nigeria during the colonial period – is one of the cradles of Pentecostalism in Cameroon. Pentecostalism soared in the 1990s when Cameroon was seriously hit by a devastating economic crisis and in recent times by the Anglophone crisis which began in 2016 till date and which has caused untold misery and suffering to many people.

The notion of mainstream generally refers to churches which are influential from the perspective of the membership. They are denominational and have a good number of members. The mainstream then refers to the majority opposed to a minority (Willander, 2020). This demographical influence which characterizes mainstream churches has a chronological/historical justification in the sense that those churches were created many centuries ago. The Catholic Church and mainstream protestant Churches were instituted respectively in the 4th and the 16th century. Their mainstreamness then derives from their anteriority and their high demography compared with Pentecostalism. In the context of Buea, they are represented by the Roman Catholic Church (RCC), the Cameroon Baptist Church (CBC) and the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC). In Cameroon, these mainstream churches are “presented by their followers as the dominant religious tradition, ignoring the existence of others, particularly indigenous and fundamental Evangelical faiths” (Lang, 2014:282).

Regarding the different modes of communication used by both emerging and mainstream churches, it is clear that all the modes are used, with the emerging churches making great use of the audio-visual landscape. According to Kuate and Ndokuo (2020), the majority

of Pentecostal media operating locally in Buea were created after the signing of the decree 2000/158/PM of April 3rd 2000 defining the conditions of creation and functioning of private audio-visual media in Cameroon. The first Pentecostal media to operate in Buea was the Revival Gospel Radio established in 2004 by Dr. Tembi Alfred Tembi who was a senior pastor in the Full Gospel Mission. During the period under study, the radio broadcasted on daily basis and its programs mainly consisted of Pentecostal songs. While analyzing the pentecostalization of the Presbyterian Church in Buea, Robert Akoko (2007:165) highlights the role of this pioneer radio by indicating that: “Those who cannot afford to own [Pentecostal] music set tune to the Revival Gospel Radio Station in Molyko, which is specialized in playing this type of music”. The radio has then greatly contributed in making Buea inhabitants use to Pentecostal culture through music notably. Apart from music, the radio also has preaching and praying programs during which Pentecostal forms of preaching and praying are displayed and made known to non-Pentecostals. However, television is more influential and determinant as far as the preaching and praying practices are concerned. Between 2013 and 2014, Buea counted two Pentecostal televisions namely Anointing TV and Ark of God TV. The first was established in 2013 by Apostle Sonny Damian, the leader of Jesus Kingdom Embassy. Through the word “Anointing” the name of this television is expressive as far as its activities are concerned. The television has the power to anoint the viewers and help them to become born again. That is the reason why it is managed by the Anointing department which is in charge of broadcasting church services and other activities of the church such as preaching, healing, deliverance sessions, testimonies, prophecies and animation. The television functions 24 hours on daily basis.

As regards to Ark of God TV, it was inaugurated in 2014 and belongs to Ark of God Covenant Ministry which is one of the most visible Pentecostal churches in Buea in terms of followers and wealth. It is a replica of Emmanuel TV broadcasting from Nigeria in the sense that John Chi Meh who is the general overseer of the church and the founder of Ark of God TV owes his prophetic career from Nigeria through the mentorship of “Prophet” T.B Joshua. This indicates the influence of Nigeria on the Pentecostal media landscape of Buea. The programs of Ark of God TV are similar to those of Emmanuel TV ranging from the broadcast of Sunday church services, healing and deliverance sessions, prophesying, testimonies and the advertisement of spiritual materials such as anointing oil, anointing water and stickers. Through these programs, the viewer becomes use to Pentecostal practices that he or she can adopt through mimicry.

The mission statement of the Cameroon Baptist Convention’s Communication and Publication Department headed by its General Manager Mr. Woloko Emmanuel Mbua says, “The CBC Communication and Publication Department exists to share Christ using the mass media and other forms of publications. Its job is to inform CBC Christians and the General Public on what is happening in and out of the Convention through radio, newspaper, television and internet.” The use of written material still goes on alongside the modern media as presented

above. Flyers, stickers, church calendars and diaries, Sunday newsletters, conference banners, billboards advertising newly created congregations and denominations are daily experiences in the Buea neighbourhood. But because there is usually little space available for the different pieces of information to be passed across, the authors usually revert to captions and shortened forms, trying to put across the main message in the shortest possible way. This usually leaves the reader with the latitude of interpreting the text in different ways, thus leading to what rhetorician's call "unstated assumptions". These assumptions are seemingly self-evident beliefs that the writer assumes we share (Spears 2006:287).

Review of Literature

Before examining the implicit mode of communication used by the emerging churches, it is important to first of all look at their language management and use. Language management is an orientation within language policy and planning as understood by researchers like Kaplan, Shohamy, and Spolsky. To Kaplan (2011:925), "a language policy is a body of ideas, laws, regulations, rules and practices intended to achieve the planned language change in the society, group or system". Unfortunately, there are situations where this policy may be hidden or realised through various covert mechanisms. As Shohamy (2006:53) pointed out:

It is often the case that formal language documents become no more than declarations of intent that can easily be manipulated and contradicted. Yet, it is essential that these mechanisms or policy devices... must be included in the general picture for understanding and interpreting LP (language policy).

Regarding language use in religious contexts, sociolinguists like Kouega (2008), Kouega and Ndzotom (2011), Kouega and Baimada (2012) have examined the situations in Catholic and Protestant churches and in the Islamic faith, all using the structural-functional model of analysis outlined in Kouega (2008). Kouega (2018) worked on language management in 20 of the 65 parishes of the Catholic Church in the city of Yaounde and found that four liturgical languages—French, Beti, English and Basaa were used, with French being by far the dominant languages, obviously because the area of study was located in francophone Cameroon. English was used in Anglophone masses in a few parishes, and Beti, i.e., a language group name represented by Ewondo, and Basaa were used singly or in conjunction with French in some parishes. As for Cameroon minority languages, they were found to be used in all the parishes observed, with Bamileke languages featuring more frequently, Bamileke being a language group name. While liturgical languages could be used for all activities in a mass—Gospel, sermon, Eucharist, etc.—minority languages were used mainly for singing and occasionally for epistle reading. Language choice in a parish seemed to be determined by a variety of factors, the dominant one being the degree of involvement of a community of speakers in church issues (cleaning of the church premises, financial contributions, active participation in masses, etc.)

A related study was conducted in Ghana, where Albakry and Ofori (2011) described language use at Catholic Masses and in informal social interactions by worshippers in Accra, the capital of Ghana, using Myers-Scotton's (1997; 2003) theory of matrix language frame. They observed ten churches in Accra and audio-recorded their services. Particular attention was paid to when and how English was employed monolingually and in combination with indigenous languages. Emphasis was laid on whether priests spoke English throughout the Mass (including homilies), code-switched and/or code-mixed, or had somebody else translate their English utterances into the main local languages spoken in Accra, namely, Ga, Akan-Twi/Fante, Ewe, and Haoussa. They identified five major parts in a church service, namely, the introduction, Bible readings, homilies, Prayers of the faithful, and Announcements. It was found that the introduction of Masses in the corpus was in English. Bible passages were first read in English and, then, in at least one of the dominant indigenous languages in Accra. Homilies were done in English only in 50 per cent of the churches surveyed; in the remaining churches, both English and the local languages were used, with homilists either speaking monolingually, or code-switching or code-mixing. Occasionally, the homilists spoke in English and consciously switched to a local language to repeat what they had already said. The Prayer of the faithful was conducted mainly in English (80%) in most churches, and was delivered in both English and the local languages (20%) in a few churches. Lastly, Announcements were made in English in churches located in upper-class neighbourhoods (30%) and in English and the local languages in churches located in both middle-class and lower-class areas (70%).

Kouega and Baimada (2012) took up language management in the Islamic faith. The study was conducted in the main mosque in the city of Maroua, the headquarters of the Far North region of Cameroon, where a series of Friday congressional prayers were observed. The analysis of the data thus collected revealed that Arabic was the dominant language used, which could be guessed. What was new was that one other language was used exclusively for sermons and announcements; it was Fulfulde, a widespread northern Cameroon lingua franca. The choice of these languages was found to be determined by a variety of factors: Arabic was the liturgical language associated with Islam while Fulfulde was the language of the Imam, that of the Muezzin and a vehicular language in the neighbourhood.

A number of researchers have worked on the different modes or channels of communication used in religious contexts and for the purposes of evangelisation. Pentecostalism, for example, is characterized by its entanglement with media (radio, television, and social media). Instead of looking at religion and media from the paradigms of 'sacred' and 'secular', they rather possess an intrinsic relationship (De Witte, 2003). These media are not mere communication tools but socio-technological institutions that contribute in shaping the religious realm (Grätz, 2014). They guarantee the presence of the Holy Spirit by "being sanctified as suitable harbingers of divine power without which it could not be transmitted and present" (Meyer, 2010a:124). This intrinsic relationship has made the media to play a central

role in the diffusion of Pentecostal practices to the public outside the church. In Buea, the audio visual mode of communication is so cherished especially by Christians of the emerging churches that, among other Pentecostal practices, healing and prophesying are done live. During healing sessions, expressions like “holy ghost fire”, “be free in the name of Jesus”, “come out of this body, you devil” are used, rather theatrically. Female Christians are particularly attracted by programs related to prophecies and testimonies. Prophesying is one of the active practices of Pentecostal churches portrayed through the media. They particularly strengthen the divine abilities of the man of God who uses it to showcase the invisible and omnipotent God. As a common trait among Pentecostal media, “prophecy time” is usually programmed on Sundays –during services- and then rebroadcasted within the week. During such moments, the supplier of prophecies usually, the head of the church, puts up certain spiritual gestures by taking a moment of silence listening to the voice and directives of God in the spiritual realm. In most cases, individuals are called out of the congregation where their personal past stories are exposed. The confirmation of such seeing is usually followed by echoing sounds from musical instruments (piano, jazz ban) and the rest of the congregation as they applaud to the divine ability of the man of God. As regard to testimonies, they are public recounting of spiritual experience. After a healing or a deliverance encounter, recipients of miracles are expected to expose to the public how they received their miracles by indicating their previous lives before and after healings. In some cases, people who received healing spiritually will show their test results from the hospital with the aim of confirming the power of the Holy Spirit (Kuate and Ndokuo, 2020:154).

An extension of the audio-visual media form of communication is the social media. In fact, whatever programmes run on TV or radio are almost entirely put on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, just to name this few. It is important to note that both the mainstream and emerging churches have recourse to the social media for evangelical purposes. In his message for “World Communications Day” emitted by the Vatican, the pope elucidated the importance of social networking in the Church. The message released on May 12, 2013 was entitled, **"Social Networks: portals of truth and faith; new spaces for evangelization."** **This was written by Pope Benedict XVI and released during the reign of Pope Francis. Benedict XVI speaks of a new *agora* or public square coming from the ancient Greek culture. The Pope Benedict XVI noted that,** “These spaces, when engaged in a wise and balanced way, help to foster forms of dialogue and debate which, if conducted respectfully and with concern for privacy, responsibility and truthfulness, can reinforce the bonds of unity between individuals and effectively promote the harmony of the human family.” (Benedict XVI, Pope, *World Communications Day Message*. May 12, 2013) It is now a very common phenomenon, especially in Buea, to receive daily meditations, prayers, songs, religious pictures and videos in different WhatsApp fora.

Methodology

The setting of the study, the informants, the instruments and the method of data collection are outlined here. The investigation took place in the town of Buea. It was conducted by a researcher assisted by 15 highly motivated assistants who were language and sociolinguistics students practising other faiths including emerging churches, Catholicism and Mainstream Protestantism. The research assistants were schooled on what data to collect. In fact, they were instructed to each visit at least five of the new churches and to bring back the following information: snapshot of the billboard advertising the church, stickers, conference flyers, snapshot of banners advertising various church events, church calendars, and any other little texts about the church. They were told to politely ask for some of these data from the resident pastor or church official. They were also to ask for the organisational chart of these churches from the same authorities. Where these charts were not formally presented in print material, the research assistants politely asked the resource person or persons to present the structure orally. They were then given the means to go round the town for the identification and collection of the data. In all, 40 new churches were identified. This is not an exhaustive list of emerging churches in the Buea municipality. In fact, there are more than a hundred Pentecostal churches in Buea (Kuate and Ndokuo, 2020:01). As hinted above, the informants comprised mainly the resident pastor or any other church official (elder, evangelist, etc). Some of the students themselves are fervent members of these churches. Data collection took place from May 2020 to April 2021.

Analysis and Discussion

The data here is presented and analysed based on a personal classification of various themes identified. They include the names of emerging churches, the appellation of their founders, their New Year messages, their weekly church programmes, and their conference or crusade themes. In most cases and for comparative purposes, allusion is made to the mainstream churches.

a) The Names of Emerging Churches

One of the major concerns emanating from the data is the naming of the emerging churches.

Emerging churches	Mainstream churches
- Prophetic Solution Ministries International	- The Roman Catholic Church (e.g Charles Lwanga parish Molyko, SS Peter and Paul University Parish, Molyko
- Omega Fire Ministries (Arena of Restoration)	- The Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC). The East Mungo Presbytery, Molyko
- God Gift Revival Ministries International	- The Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC). Macedonia Baptist Church

- City of Deliverance International	
- Ark of God Covenant Ministry	
- Maison de Repos (House of Rest)	
- Fullness of the Spirit International.aka Garden of Life Cathedral	
- The Sanctuary Church of God International (SCOG)(Making the Heart of Man the Dwelling Place of God)	
- Kings Assembly International Churches (KAIC)	
- My Father’s House Cathedral	

Table 1. Showing the names of emerging as well as traditional churches in Buea

If we consider names like ‘Prophetic Solution Ministries International’, ‘Omega Fire Ministries’(Arena of Restoration), ‘City of Deliverance International’, just to cite these, we discover powerful implicit messages promising instant divine intervention in our everyday tribulations. This is usually through prophecies, the consuming fire of the holy spirit, deliverance, healing, divine favour—all subsumed in these names. This is in sharp contrast to the naming of the mainstream churches such as the Roman Catholic Church, the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, and the Cameroon Baptist Convention in which words like prophetic, deliverance, sanctuary, revival, etc do not feature. Still with respect to names, we notice the systematic use of the word “international” or its synonyms. Is it that if the name of a church does not carry the word “international”, then it is limited both in popularity and in its spiritual capacity in solving ‘global’ problems? Notice that some mainstream churches such as the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon and Cameroon Baptist convention have territorial delimitation in their nomenclature.

Kouega (2018) had actually pointed out the fact that it is now fashionable for emerging churches to adopt names comprising globalising terms such as “all nations”, “world”, “international”, “global”.

b) Appellation of Founders

Emerging churches	Appellation of Founders
- Prophetic Solution Ministries International	Prophet T.G Roger

- Omega Fire Ministries (Arena of Restoration)	Apostle P. Johnson Suleman
- God Gift Revival Ministries International	Evangelist N.F Dieudonne (End time Revival General)
- City of Deliverance International	Apostle Ernest Amin
- Fullness of the Spirit International.aka Garden of Life Cathedral	Rev. Br NN Wilson
- The Sanctuary Church of God International (SCOG)(Making the Heart of Man the Dwelling Place of God)	Apostle/Mrs. A.E Stanley
- Kings Assembly International Churches (KAIC)	Bishop elect Joshua-Ramson T
- Ark of God Covenant Ministry	Apostle John Chi
- My Father’s House Cathedral	Rev./Mrs. T.N Philip
- Star of Success Evangelistic Ministry	Apostle Nnogge Valery
Mainstream Churches	Leaders
- The Roman Catholic Church (e.g Charles Lwanga parish Molyko, SS Peter and Paul University Parish, Molyko	The Pope The Parish Priests
- The Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC). The East Mungo Presbytery, Molyko	The Moderator The Resident Pastor
- The Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC). Macedonia Baptist Church	The Resident Pastor

Table 2. Showing the appellations of the founders/leaders of both emerging and mainstream churches

A closer look at how the founders or promoters of the emerging churches are called reveals the consistent use of religious titles and honorifics such as “Prophet”, “Apostle”, “Evangelist” “God’s General”, etc. If you are a religious leader called Prophet “X” or “Y”, are you saying indirectly that you can see the future and can interpret the future of whoever comes to you more than your other peer pastors of both the emerging and mainstream churches? If you are Evangelist “X” or “Y”, are you intimating that your preaching capacity is only comparable to that of St Paul and so Christians and would-be Christians should come to you in order to get the best of interpretation of the bible? In the same vein, a church leader called Apostle “X” or “Y” leaves the reader or ordinary Christian with no other option than to elevate him or her to the level of the twelve apostles in the bible. While a majority of church leaders

know and refer to themselves as ordinary workers in the Lord’s vineyard, others arrogate to themselves the title, “God’s General” as if to say they are not ordinary workers but special and potent ones.

Another linguistic phenomenon observed in the appellation of the founders or promoters of these emerging churches is the use of the initials of the first one or two names before writing the last one in full. Consider the following: Apostle T.G Roger, Evangelist N.F Dieudonne, Apostle A.E Stanley, Rev. T.N Philips, and Apostle P. Johnson Suleman. A possible interpretation of this pattern of coining names is that it is in analogy to successful men of God such as Prophet T.B Joshua, the founder of the Synagogue Church of all Nations—SCOAN. If SCOAN has become a common mnemonic among Pentecostal Christians, then we can also easily notice the same analogy with the Sanctuary Church of God International—SCOG, Kings Assembly International—KAIC.

However, in the course of the analysis of the data at our disposal, we noticed the humility with which the founder and promoter of Fullness of the Spirit International (Garden of Life Cathedral) calls himself and urges his followers to call him—Br NN Wilson. Because he calls himself “Br” NN Wilson, is he less spiritually potent than the other leaders who are referred to as Prophet “X” or “Y”, Evangelist “X” or “Y”, Apostle “X” or “Y”? Similarly, are all the pastors and priests of the mainstream churches spiritually less potent because they do not have such religious titles as discussed above attached to their names?

c) New Year Messages

Emerging Churches	New Year Messages
Fullness of the Spirit International.aka Garden of Life Cathedral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2016 – My Year of Sonship in Christ - 2018- My Year of Divine Order - 2019-My Year of Great Awakening - 2021-My Year of the Great Transfiguration
Apostolic Gospel Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2020-The Year of Supernatural Harvest
Jesus Reigns Supreme Mission Worldwide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2021-My Year of Divine Fulfilment
Kings Reign Ministry International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2021-The Year of Enlargement and Lights
Prophetic Solution Ministries International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2020-My Year of Total Celebration
Christ Life Apostolic Ministry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2020-My Year of Greater Influence
Christ Liberation Gospel Embassy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2021- My Year of Speed and total Takeover
Mainstream Churches	New Year Messages
The Roman Catholic Church (e.g Charles Lwanga parish Molyko, SS Peter and Paul University Parish, Molyko	-

The Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC). The East Mungo Presbytery, Molyko	- 2021-My Year of Kingdom Alignment
The Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC). Macedonia Baptist Church	- 2019-My Year of Intentional Obedience

Table 3. Showing New Year Messages of both emerging and mainstream churches

The coining of New Year messages, usually termed “prophetic”, at the beginning of a new year is a practice which is now en vogue within the Buea municipality and especially among the emerging churches. With respect to the messages of the emerging churches, the common denominator is the idea of “fulfilment”, “celebration”, “divine harvest”, “magical increase”, “exceptional breakthrough”, “speedy possession of what is yours”, etc. In line with the interpretive mode of communication, we can say that if an apostle, evangelist or even prophet has prophesied a year of celebration or supernatural harvest, then it goes without saying that those who have not celebrated anything for years or those who have been harvest-dry for years should come to these churches and be fulfilled. After all, it is God himself who has spoken to the “prophets”.

On the other hand, we noticed that the mainstream churches who manage to come up with New Year messages are more spiritually conscious in the content of these messages. For example, we have “2021-My Year of Kingdom Alignment (The Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC)”, “2019-My Year of Intentional Obedience (The Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC)”. Curiously, we discovered that the New Year messages of one of the emerging churches, that is, Fullness of the Spirit International, have nothing to do with “harvest”, “celebration”, “enlargement”, “prosperity”, etc. For example, we have “2016 – My Year of Sonship in Christ”, “2018- My Year of Divine Order”, “2019-My Year of Great Awakening”, “2021-My Year of the Great Transfiguration”. We found it intriguing that with the ravaging effects of COVID 19, and the year 2020 being generally considered one of the most difficult in recent history, God still told the “apostles”, “evangelists”, and “prophets” to declare “2020 - my year of total celebration”, “2020 - my year of supernatural harvest”, “2020 - my year of speed and total takeover”.

D) Weekly Church Programmes

Omega Fire Ministries (Arena of Restoration)

Days	Activities
Sunday	Prophetic service
Tuesday	Word encounter
Wednesday	I must get there
Friday	Prayer connection
3 rd Friday of the month	Fire and Miracle night

Table 4. Showing the weekly church programme of one the emerging churches
 Diocese of Buea. SS Peter and Paul University Parish, Molyko

Days	Activities
Sunday morning	Masses
Sunday 5pm, Thursday 4pm	Vespers and benediction
1 st Saturday of the month 9.am	Infant baptism
Wednesday 3-5 Saturday 3-5 Sunday 10:30 – 11:30	Catechism
Wednesday 5 pm Friday 5pm	Weekday evening masses

Table 5. Showing the weekly programme of one of the mainstream churches

A comparative analysis of the weekly programmes of both the mainstream churches and that of emerging churches reveals that emerging churches make great use of silent communication. On Sunday mornings, while the SS Peter and Paul University Parish has a number of “masses”, the Omega Fire Ministries has a “prophetic service”. We therefore note here an indirect invitation to those who are searching for God’s intervention to attend the “prophetic service” since the “apostle” will surely prophesy “success in your business”, “fruit of the womb”, and “acquisition of visa”, and so on and so forth. If on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday, the SS Peter and Paul University Parish, Molyko has the “teaching of the catechism” and by extension the bible, the Omega Fire Ministries has but “word encounter”. By “word encounter”, you are not just reading and learning the bible, you are talking directly with Jesus Christ. While the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) organises regular night vigils on the last Friday of every month, the Omega Fire Ministries organises on the 3rd Friday of the month “fire and miracle night”. The message here is clear: instead of attending an unproductive so-called “night vigil”, rather attend the “fire and miracle night” to have your problems burnt away by the consuming fire of the Holy Spirit. Come to the “fire and miracle night” to have your miraculous “healing”, “deliverance”, “breakthrough”, etc.

E) Conference/Crusade Themes

Denomination	Theme
Star of Success Evangelistic Ministry	Mega Festival (2021) The Shekinah Glory. (Restoring the Tabernacle of God) April 2021
Grace Embassy Ministry Church	Rain of Revival (May 2021)
Apostolic gospel mission	Favour Day Service (Friday 30 th April 2021)
The Sanctuary Church of God International (SCOG)	Kingdom Marriage Conference (Feb. 19 th -20 th , 4 pm daily, 2021)

(Making the heart of man a dwelling place of God)	
Ark of God Covenant Ministry	It is Finished (All My Problems are Finished) John 19:30 Let there be Light
Kings Assembly International Churches (KAIC)	Arise, go forward to the next level Featuring: Word Encounter, Healing, Deliverance, Salvation, Prophetic Release

Table 6. Showing the conference/crusade themes of some emerging churches

The conference and crusade themes of emerging churches lend themselves to multiple interpretations, although they all yield to the fact that their church activities are more efficient and fruitful than those of mainstream churches. When the Sanctuary Church of God International organises a 2-day conference on the theme “kingdom marriage”, the possible underpinning is that marriage, as conducted and practised by Christians of the mainstream churches, is based on earthly standards and therefore not effective. Prospective couples should rather come and be imparted with the secret of heavenly marriage. The other themes all foreshadow healing, deliverance, divine favour, the end of suffering, etc (see table 6 above).

Conclusion

Following the different themes analysed and interpreted in this reflection, that is, the naming of the emergent churches, the appellation of their founders or promoters, their new year prophetic messages, their weekly church programmes, and their conference themes, it was found that these emerging churches use this implicit mode of communication to lure adherents of the traditional churches as well as to attract prospective followers especially as the written texts usually carry promises of healing, deliverance, breakthrough, prosperity, fertility, protection, etc. Curiously, it was found that some mainstream churches such as the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC) and Roman Catholic Church (RCC) through her Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) now use this same mode of communication.

However, unstated assumptions in persuasive writing are not necessarily bad or manipulative. In fact, they are necessary if the argument is not to ‘bog down into mind-numbing tedium’, the certain idea if a writer spelled out every idea underlying the discussion. In other words, they represent a kind of shorthand. Nonetheless, if the assumptions are invalid or if they do not accord with your thinking and belief, then you do not have to accept the argument (spears 2006).

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