

**Analyzing and interpreting the different realizations of the terms “AIDS” and
“condom” in Basaa (A40)**

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Calvet (1993) states that “Les langues n’existent pas sans les gens qui les parlent”. In other words, the dynamism of a given language depends partly on the input of its users.

It is a worldwide view that the introduction of new realities within any given human society obviously leads to the creation of new concepts and lexical items and, as a matter of fact, to the enrichment of its language. This enrichment can be done through various processes (e.g. borrowing, calques, coinages, etc.).

In the present study, I intend to describe, analyse and interpret the different elements involved in the expression of “AIDS” and “condom” in Basaa, a Bantu language spoken in the southern part of Cameroon in Central Africa.

The creativity of Basaa speakers in their attempt to fill in lexical gaps is revealing. The way they operate to refer to HIV/AIDS-related issues does not only portray their creative skills and their aptitude to adapt their speech to different circumstances (context); it also indicates their representation and conceptualization of these two items in particular, and the global area of AIDS in general.

The following Basaa lexical items will constitute the corpus of the study:

For AIDS, a preliminary research shows four different realizations: SIDÀ, ndôn, kon bibańga bina, kon mintende mi gwalak.

For Condom, three various manifestations have been identified: kondom, hikódó hí ôk, támb í ôk.

This consolidates an idea earlier advocated by Pairault (1997: 148): “chaque langue est capable de traduction”. In other words, it is possible to express any idea in any language.