

# Extroversion and Theoricity in German Language Programs at the Universities in Cameroon

Yvonne DOUNANG

Yvonne Dounang is PhD-Researcher on “German studies in Cameroon and Professional Perspectives”, Cameroon

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2023.7012112>

Received: 24 November 2023; Revised: 09 December 2023; Accepted: 13 December 2023; Published: 12 January 2024

## ABSTRACT

Being a student of German in Cameroon since 2012, the researcher has noticed that graduates after their degree have difficulties finding a job. It is with the goal of clarifying this situation that this research has been carried out. The researcher would like to find out the reasons why they face such problems. The researcher has worked in different fields in which German graduates are actually working or exercising. The different job offer's descriptions, whether from the public or from the private sector, have allowed the researcher to come to the conclusion that there is a gap between the courses at universities and the needs of the job market. There is a mismatch between the knowledge taught in school or at universities in Cameroon and the competencies required by employers in Cameroon. The acquired knowledge is extrovert, related to foreign lands and is also theoretical. To reach at this point, the researcher has first shared a questionnaire to collect data on the jobs or the different works of German graduates, then the participative method has been used to have more information on the relation between German studies and professional career. After collecting data, these have been analysed using the qualitative and the quantitative method, and diagrams have allowed to represent the results in terms of percentages. From these diagrams, the researcher found that teaching is the most practiced activity, further presented the teaching programs at the level of the university (Universities of Yaounde, Dschang, Douala and Maroua) to find the relationship between these programs and the professional situation of these graduates.

**Keywords:** Contextualization, curricula, extroversion, German graduates, professionalization, theoretical, unemployment

## INTRODUCTION

Extroversion, in a general sense, can be understood as an action, a process, or an attitude consisting of focusing one's attention on the outside, on the other. In the context of education in Cameroon, extraversion is a policy that places the emphasis on what is outside Cameroon. It is a textbook design policy whose objective is to highlight foreign society, its challenges, its economy, its demographics, and many others, to the detriment of the realities facing Cameroonian society.

Theorecity refers to the theoretical nature of courses in the German departments of Cameroonian universities. They are considered here to be theoretical for reasons such as the gap between the content of the courses and the employment of graduates, despite the diversity of job offers. Courses as currently taught do not result in the development of concrete know-how relating to the labour market, yet it should be remembered that the objective of training is to be able to make use of its results, to make use of the skills acquired during this training, and to put these skills to the benefit of society. The theoretical nature of courses is also the result of lectures. A course that is intended to be practical is difficult to achieve simply by reading and copying, by means of explanations. A practical course involves simulations and real-life work situations. The essence of this work will be to show how the teaching programs in Cameroon are

extroverted, particularly for Germanic studies in the various universities. We will present the teaching units in the German departments. The researcher will then give a brief presentation of the consequences that these programs may have on the future of future German graduates in Cameroon. First and foremost, it is important to recognize that the number of students in language centers is constantly increasing as a result of the work carried out by the DAAD and the Goethe Institute, among many other German organizations. In the same vein, the number of German-speaking students is constantly increasing, and this is the result of the motivation of secondary school pupils, motivation created either by the teaching or by the activities of German academic structures.

### • Components of German language programs at universities

It should be remembered that German students have around 10 components or subjects per semester, whether they are studying German only or trilingual German. At the universities of Douala, Yaoundé and Maroua, German students study only German language, literature, culture and civil is ation. At the University of Dschang, on the other hand, in order to study German, students must take a trilingual French-English-German course. In this case, the 10 subjects include French, English and German. The German components at the University of Dschang are very often four per semester, as opposed to the number of courses at the other universities. At the other three universities, German subjects can number up to eight per semester.

German departments offer the following subjects among others relating to Germany:

- Introduction to the History and German literature,
- The German media, German linguistics and synchronic analysis,
- History of ideas in Germany,
- Great German classics,
- German-Cameroonian relations
- Theories of acquisition of German as a second language
- German thinkers
- German literature and culture
- History of German literature up to the Middle Ages
- The historical relationship between Africa and Germany

## IMPACT ON STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE WORLD

Courses for German students may have advantages, but they also have a major negative effect on the way they see their professional future, on the way they perceive the world, Cameroon and German society. Before going any further, c should mention that the DAAD plays the same role for universities as the Goethe Institute does for secondary schools. It regularly organizes conferences on studying in Germany after obtaining a bachelor's degree and on the possibilities for a professional career in Germany. It develops a passion for Germany among students. Given all that the DAAD has to offer, students, especially undergraduates of first and second years, work hard to obtain a degree so that they can continue their studies in Germany or find a job in Germany or a German-speaking country. However, the lack of a document tracking these graduates is a major concern for students around the world. Many of them have no idea what has become of their predecessors, whether these predecessors have a job, were able to obtain a visa to continue their studies in Germany, or were granted a visa to work in Germany. Not having any information about the professional situation of the students who graduated before them, they become more involved and feel motivated by what DAAD has to say about them.

Among the negative effects of these courses are the appetite for life in Germany, the huge investment in language school and, above all, teaching as the main profession to which the skills developed in Germanic studies are dedicated.

## 2.1- Appetite for life in Germany

It should be noted here that this appetite for life in Germany does not originate at university but is very often a phenomenon that is triggered by contact with learning German at secondary school and is reinforced by contact with textbooks describing or presenting Germany. When you work in a library in the German department, where most of the books are written about and by Germans, you realize how beautiful the images in these books are. The landscape is beautiful, the streets are beautiful and the buildings are well constructed. The leisure activities that the programs present are a way of attracting the attention of these young Cameroonians, a way of developing their curiosity about Germany, a country that is becoming their dream home.

This admiration may also come from the fact that means of transport are more developed in Germany than in Cameroon, especially for these students who have to take taxis every morning in which they are seated close together. And even when a document recounts the war and Germany's past, you quickly realize that at the end of the document the last pages present Germany in its current state, a state of beauty – in short, you realize that these documents only give readers a very positive image of German society. In the books describing teaching in Germany, the classrooms are presented in a way that appeals to potential learners, they are very well equipped and the teaching conditions are favourable to teaching and learning. These books also mention the integration of migrants in Germany, the opportunities they have to find work, to be educated and to enjoy the same rights as other residents or native Germans.

Books suggest that people can move around at any time of the day or night without running any risks, that lost objects are quickly found and that the police automatically intervene in the slightest need. From the textbooks and films, you'd think that Germany didn't have power cuts, water shortages or even gas shortages for domestic use. In short, Cameroonian learners' admiration for Germany stems from the lessons they are taught. These are all factors that further encourage learners to make living in Germany one of their goals in order to achieve their full potential.

Away from the textbooks, it has to be said that a university student is more experienced than a secondary school pupil when it comes to using the internet. Academic research also leads them to discover writings that promote German society. This is the case with André Ekama, a Cameroonian writer living in Germany. He says

*J'aivoulu donner espoir aux émigrés en choisissant ce personnage' Okomje qui passe de la gastronomie à la mairie de Wamsbuk. Cette situation pouvait paraître utopique en 2007, année de publication de mon livre, mais, depuis, les choses ont évolué. De plus en plus d'émigrés s'investissent dans les partis politiques en Allemagne et certains siègent comme élus au parlement fédéré ou comme conseillers municipaux. Le mixage culturel n'est plus une fiction en Allemagne. Nous le vivons. La population étrangère exprime son désir de se faire écouter et à valoriser sa présence. Ils ont droit de cité et d'affirmation dans la politique tout comme ils contribuent au développement de l'Allemagne. [...] j'évoque la corruption dans nos sociétés et beaucoup rient lors de mes lectures alors que nous sommes tous victimes des dérives de certains fonctionnaires qui font payer leur service alors qu'ils sont des serviteurs de l'État. Au Cameroun on dit « on va faire comment ? » [1]&[2]*

The intention of this quotation is not to judge the author's comments, but simply to extract or highlight all the factors that motivate Cameroonian students to live in Germany, a developed country. In this quote, the author mentions two factors: a pull factor and a push factor. The pull factor, or the factor that attracts Cameroonians in Germany, is the intercultural mix, the fact that Cameroonians are taken into account in German administrative policy and, in short, equality between men and women. The push factor is based on corruption in Cameroon.

## 2.2- Investment in language centers

When you think of traveling to Germany, you immediately think of linguistic centers and the Goethe

Institute. Any Cameroonian who wants to go to Germany for a long stay, whether for study or employment, must have a certain level of language proficiency, which is certified by the Goethe Institute. Some people register with local language centers, but others register directly with the Goethe Institute. Whatever the case, all these learners must take the certification tests. These may be the test Daf, the ZDaF A1-C2 or more.

Table 1: Price list for courses and exams at the Goethe Institut

Level	Course duration	Fees for a course	Examination costs for internal candidates	Examination costs for external candidates
A1 (Goethe-Zertifikat A1)	9 weeks	150 000	40 000	50 000
A2 (Goethe-Zertifikat A2)	9 weeks	150 000	50 000	60 000
B1 (Goethe-Zertifikat B1)	12 weeks	190 000	80 000	100 000
B2 (Goethe-Zertifikat B2)	12 weeks	190 000	100 000	120 000
C1 (Goethe-Zertifikat C1)	12 weeks	190 000	120 000	140 000
C2 (Goethe-Zertifikat C2)			150 000	160 000
Test Da F			66 000	66 000

The table above shows the courses according to German language level and the related fees. This table clearly shows that Cameroonians are investing heavily in language centers to learn German. In addition to the table on prices, the statistics below give figures on the number of Cameroonians learning German, for the Goethe Institute alone.

Table 2: Number of German learners at the Goethe Institut in 2020

	Deutschlernende gesamt	Gesamtzahl Schülerinnen und Schüler	Schulen mit Fremdsprachenunterricht	Schulen mit DaF	DaF-Lehrkräfte	DaF Lernende Schulbereich 2020	Zuwachs/Rückgang im Vergleich zu 2015	Hochschulen mit Deutsch allgemein	Deutschlernende Studierende 2020	Zuwachs/Rückgang im Vergleich zu 2015	DaF Einrichtungen EWB	DaF Lernende EWB	DaF Lernende an Goethe Instituten	Perspektive Schule
Jordanien	8.746	2.051.841	7.262	12	22	3120	2.520	2	2.441	-1.829	7	1.300	1.885	↗
Kambodscha	697	2.333.607	350	0	0	0	0	2	22	22	0	0	675	
Kamerun	239.815	9.2942.96	2.872	2.472	2.367	230.000	9.543	8	1.887	87	24	4.600	3.328	↗
Kanada	31.973	5.117.328	11.000	345	603	15.000	-800	36	15.115	-3.108			1.858	↘
Kasachstan	23.034	3.050.770	7.047	62	161	12.978	-7.156	22	3.544	1.749			6.512	↘
Kenia	13.125	16.000.000	20.000	110	300	10.000	7.464	6	625	-61	50	500	2.000	↗
Kirgisistan	24.829	600.000	2.227	75	152	15.413	-5.562	32	8.662	1.895			754	↘
Kolumbien	19.433	1.9833.092	27.665	19	160	9.101	1.763	38	8.001	3.001	22	1.981	350	↗
Kosovo	9.099	345.540	1.118	1.118	67	2.000	0	12	5.867				1.232	
Kroatien <sup>6</sup>	181.177	46.4475	2.471	2.471	1.919	154.879	-15.121		1.058		46	24.052	1.188	↘
Kuba	2.401	1.628.793	9.016	7	9	385		4	430		14	1.200	386	
Laos	65	1.500.000	0	0	4	0	0	1	65	27	0	0	0	
Lettland	25.514	205.113	748	281	375	22.763	426	13	970	-69	20	350	1.431	↗

Source: Auswärtiges Amt “Deutsch als Fremdsprache weltweit, Datenerhebung 2020”, p 14



In 2020, if we simply take 150,000 FCFA as the average amount per learner and per course level, and multiply it by the number of candidates (3,328), we obtain the sum of FCFA 499,200,000. Examination fees average 105,000 FCFA, giving an average of 349,440,000 FCFA in 2020. In 2020, only the Goethe Institute will record an average sum of 848,640,000 (Eight hundred and forty-eight million six hundred and forty thousand) FCFA. In addition to the Goethe Institute, there are many other language centers in Cameroon. If Germany, through the Goethe Institute, rakes in so many millions in a single session, it's only natural that its representatives should make speeches about Germany as a dream country for young Cameroonians. The more the discourses beautify Germany, the more Cameroonians enroll at the language centers.

### 2.3- Teaching skills

The current design of the teaching programs in the German department of Cameroonian universities restricts the field of application of the skills of German graduates at the end of their studies. These skills are mainly devoted to teaching, as we have seen from the questionnaires shared in order to find out the different activities exercised by the graduates of German studies (41% over 81 students questioned). Nearly half of those questioned were in teaching, including teachers who had graduated from teacher training colleges, temporary teachers in local school and teachers in language centers. All the people who said that they had got their job thanks to the German language are precisely those who work in teaching in Cameroon. For many other people, neither the German language nor the know-how they would have acquired by studying German is of much use to them when it comes to looking for or holding a job.

This tendency to multiply the number of German teachers can be explained by the work of Cameroonians during the colonial period. With travel and accommodation costs for Germans in Cameroon rising steadily, some Cameroonians had to be trained to work as intermediaries between the Germans and the indigenous Cameroonians. At this point, teaching German made perfect sense. And even after the German colonial period, the teaching remained more or less the same. But we have to recognize that today the challenges have changed, and studying German for the sole purpose of teaching is to reduce or limit the job opportunities for German-speaking graduates.

It's when these students obtain a bachelor's or master's degree and want to join the labour market that they realize how difficult the job market is for German graduates in Cameroon. That's when they realize that all the information they have about the German language and society is of little use to them when it comes to finding a job. Their profile does not match that required by employers. Graduates with a degree in German studies may have a bachelor's or master's, but this does nothing to change their inability or their difficulties in finding a job, either by joining employers' organizations or by setting up their own businesses. In the same way, we can quote Gomsu who, back in 1985, questioned the self-replicating function of teachers in the German Studies department. German studies should lead to a diversity of careers. And by careers here, we mean activities that really take into account the intellectual level of learners, as well as their academic background as a whole. This is simply to say that a job does not only take into account the bachelor's or master's degree, but also and above all the skills that these degrees imply.

As we have seen, the teaching, learning programs are very extroverted. As well as being extroverted, it has to be said that these curricula are highly theoretical and do not encourage job-seeking, because the work's market needs not only knowledge, but also and above all know-how and interpersonal skills. In this market, what matters most are verifiable skills, the means to enable employees to do what they are employed to, to work towards increasing the productivity of an organization.

## THEORICITY AS THE MAIN CHARACTERISTIC OF GERMAN STUDIES IN UNIVERSITIES

It is important to introduce this section with the following quote: "Young people who choose the Faculty of

Arts, Humanities and Sciences or the Faculty of Science, among other classic faculties, should no longer complete their studies without any skills and end up unemployed”[3].

In the same way, Jonte criticizes the acquisition of university degrees without being able to get a job. We think that this needs to be reviewed. Some courses open up a wide range of opportunities for self-employment. And speaking of self-employment, language teaching, for example, only gives rise to the creation of linguistic and cultural centers if we are to remain within the logic of the academic curriculum. In the Cameroonian context, becoming a writer would not enable graduates to support themselves financially, it would also not prevent them from having parallel jobs.

### 3.1- Components of the Bachelor cycle

Some subjects for the Bachelor’s programs are: ALL 111 Conversation/phonetics, ALL 121 Reading and analysis of texts by German authors, ALL 131 Reading newspapers, ALL 141 Introduction to German history and knowledge of German-speaking countries, ALL 211: Comparative stylistics and translation, ALL 221: The German novel, ALL 311: German Linguistics and Synchronic, ALL 312: Great German classics, ALL 322: Literature and society.

The courses given at the universities are slightly different in terms of titles depending on whether you go from the University of Yaoundé to that of Dschang, Douala or Maroua.

The grammar courses, among many others, are taught from level 1 to level 3, which raises the question of their importance over three years of study. A simple reading of the course titles reveals that they are highly theoretical, implying no creativity and requiring no modification. For the most part, they simply reproduce in different terms what has already been said about Germany, its language and culture, its development and so on, by previous researchers or students. In literature, as in linguistics, there is no need for learners to create new themes; the content is virtually the same. The skills have always been “speaking, listening, understanding, reading and writing”. Even if the names we give to these skills are different, the skills are still the same. Even if these learners studied German grammar for ten years, they wouldn’t change the gender (feminine, masculine or neutral) or case (nominative/subject, accusative/COD, dative/COI or genitive/possessive) of nouns in texts; they wouldn’t change the grammatical rules.

About teaching literature, we have a quote from a student during a survey: “Die Literatur? Meistens im Alltag braucht man das ja nicht. Wenn man nicht für wissenschaftliche Arbeit arbeitet, braucht man die nie (Stud. 22)”[4]&[5]

### 3. 2- Components of Master’s program

In the Master’s programme we have the following courses among others: ALL 411: Research Methodology : specificity of scientific work and criteria of scientific work, ALL 421: Technique for writing a scientific paper, ALL 414: Linguistic theories, ALL 424: Theories of language acquisition and didactics, ALL 444: Sociolinguistics, ALL 911: German language around the world

In the Master’s program, the number of courses is smaller than in the Bachelor’s program, but the content remains more or less the same. The course titles are slightly different, but the content is not.

The English word “Masters” means “to master”, which means that a student who obtains a Master’s degree should perfectly know a certain number of things, being a specialist in one. Even if German graduates were specialists in the German language, what use would that be to them outside of teaching? Is it possible to set up a personal business for the benefit of Cameroonian society thanks to Germany’s place in the world or its history? The answer to this question is obviously “no”, especially given the quality of the training given to students. Experience clearly shows that graduates (Masters) struggle to integrate public or private structures,

rather than setting up their own structures. This is because they have no knowledge of how to set up and run a business, and if they want to enter the labour's world, they should start by working in a structure where they are told what to do, when to do it and, above all, how to do it. These graduates can't really design a job description, so they have to stick to what others have designed.

### 3.3- Components of the PhD Cycle

For the PhD cycle, we can mention the following components: MGR 111: General Research Methodology; TDC 112: Communication Techniques; RDF 113: Fundraising; ALL 114: New Themes in Language, Literature and Cultural studies; ALL 123: Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis in Language, Literature and Cultural studies; ALL 124: Theories and Models of Analysis in Language, Literature and Cultural studies; ALL 115: Perspectives in African German studies.

This last component seems to make all the difference. Just reading the title, one imagines a course where the aim is not to learn German just to speak it, but to see how German studies can give access to many other sectors of activity.

With the exception of this last component, it should be noted that all the others are simply theoretical. The courses on methods of analysis are merely repetitions, because in the Masters cycle students are already involved in them as part of the preparation of their dissertations. It is tempting to believe that German Studies is the same as repeating programs throughout the teaching/learning process. In such a logic, students are conditioned to produce a thesis on theoretical aspects or subjects such as the analysis of a literary work, the history of Germany in a given period, immigration to Germany, etc.

But as far as the history of Germany is concerned, for example, it would have been interesting if it had inspired students to question the quality of the courses they were being taught. Based on this logic, the fact that Cameroon and Germany have a common past (divided countries under the tutelage of other countries) and that Germany is now highly developed should make it possible to question its teaching methods and its means of boosting its development. But it is unfortunate that German studies produce graduates who do not really meet the demands of either the local or international job market. Whether we're talking about the University of Dschang, the University of Yaoundé, the University of Douala or the University of Maroua, all we can see is that the courses are very theoretical. To this end, we have the following quotation:

Ich finde, die meisten Universitäten in Thailand unterrichten Literatur, Linguistik am meisten. Ja, aber selten Deutsch für Beruf, Deutsch für Wirtschaft, Deutsch für Tourismus. Und ich habe gedacht, es ist hier nur die einzige Universität, die Deutsch im Hauptfach für den Beruf unterrichtet. Und wir sollen hier Deutsch für den Beruf unterrichten, anders als in Bangkok. (Doz. 6)<sup>[6]&[7]</sup>

The course is therefore organised around two main areas: firstly, the teaching of languages and cultures, with possible pairs (English-German, English-Spanish, English-Italian) and possible triples (French-English-German, French-English-Spanish, French-English-Italian). We also have cross-disciplinary courses that provide students with knowledge on subjects such as ethics and IT. It should be noted, however, that cross-disciplinary courses represent only a small part of the overall teaching.

As we have seen, whether we are talking about the Bachelor cycle, the Master's cycle or even the Doctorate cycle, the teaching is mainly theoretical.

## LIMITING JOBS THROUGH PROGRAM DESIGNING

The teaching programs are the basis, the first element to be taken into account in the professionalization of students. Students only enter the professional world thanks to the skills they have acquired, thanks to the

knowledge they possess in a specific field. Programs must be designed in such a way that graduates are in a position to easily integrate employment structures or, more generally, the labour market. If the programs are not in line with the expectations of the job market, if the teaching focuses only on developing soft skills, it becomes difficult for students to integrate easily after their academic studies. As far as the German program in Cameroon is concerned, we believe that the programs do not meet, or no longer meet, the expectations of today's professional market. We have highlighted a number of limitations or shortcomings: the lack of a technical component in the programs and the focus on the teaching outcome.

#### 4.1- Lack of technical components in teaching programs

One of the major problems facing the Cameroonian labour market is the mismatch between the skills required by employers and those acquired by young jobseekers. The need for efficiency and competitiveness in the job market means that training courses must be designed to enable graduates to position themselves not simply as job seekers, but rather as providers of skills. It is very important here to distinguish between a job seeker and a skills provider. A person may ask for a job without having any real skills. In this case, the applicant adapts to whatever the employer offers. On the other hand, people offering skills add concrete know-how to their job application; they offer their know-how in exchange for remuneration. They know exactly what they can do, and are able to carry out the task entrusted to them without too much difficulty.

If we take, for example, the course entitled "German literature of the 18th century", we will ask why in the 21st century, when the challenges are evolving and the context is changing, we have to study German literature of the 18th century. What's in it for us today, what benefit do students gain from mastering 18th century texts rather than seeking to acquire the skills and know-how they need to improve their living conditions, their vital environment?

Even for those who would like to make a career in writing, in the production of scientific documents, in the production of books, works etc. we think that the programs as conceived today are not or no longer favourable to them. If we look at the calls for papers in the field of writing, we will see that the focus is increasingly on contemporary literature. The calls for papers actually talk about topical issues, things that are happening in the 20th and 21st centuries, such as gender discrimination, freedom of expression, the problems faced by minorities in different countries etc. So studying 18th century literature today does nothing to help future writers professionally integrate into the contemporary society.

Malheureusement, à la fin de leurs études, très peu sont les étudiants qui sont capables de s'engager immédiatement dans la vie professionnelle ; beaucoup n'ont aucune idée de leurs compétences effectives afférentes aux exigences du marché du travail, et dès lors font valoir exclusivement leur niveau d'étude par le diplôme. Une attitude qui n'est pas propre à faciliter leur insertion socioprofessionnelle quand on sait que d'une manière générale, les entreprises requièrent pour leur productivité, certes des diplômés, mais spécifiquement ceux qui sont préparés à l'exécution concrète, et donc opérationnels à l'immédiat. Très souvent, le jeune diplômé affronte un décalage entre la formation qu'il a reçue et les débouchés ou les perspectives concrètes que lui offre la société.[8]&[9]

In addition to Jonte's assertion, Tchomga, Kuété and Schamp point out that: « À l'insuffisance du contenu s'ajoute le mercantilisme des enseignants qui les dispensent. Dans beaucoup de cas, les cours créés dans les programmes l'ont été pour améliorer leur salaire. De plus, le nombre d'heures de cours supplémentaires dépasse de loin le nombre d'heures de cours réglementaires. »[10]&[11] This quote simply confirms what we said in the previous sections about the living conditions of teachers with German degrees. If teachers are looking to improve their salaries, it is precisely because the amount they receive each month is not enough to cover their monthly expenses. They have to find ways of meeting their financial needs and looking after their families.



## 4.2- More teachers versus fewer requests

Teaching is the most prioritized area in German Studies. If we refer to the academic programs presented above, we can see that a large proportion of the courses, especially at undergraduate level, focus on acquisition and learning technics, on how to transmit or transfer linguistic knowledge, on how to construct sentences etc in short, it is mainly linguistics. Reading the texts written in relation to the teaching/learning of German as a foreign language, a number of statements are made about teaching as the main function of studies in German Studies.

Mit der Maîtrise-Förderung war die Promotionsförderung für besonders qualifizierte afrikanische Deutschlehrer einhergegangen. Es ging nicht nur darum, afrikanische Deutschlehrer aus- und fortzubilden, sondern auch darum, die deutschen Abteilungen in den 14 frankophonen afrikanischen Ländern in die Lage zu versetzen, eines Tages selbst Deutschlehrer ausbilden zu können.<sup>[12]&[13]</sup>

However, institutions are not created as much as students graduate, which limits the employment rate of graduates wishing to pursue a career in teaching. If the primary objective of German studies is teaching, then the state should rethink ways of reducing the rate at which students enter the German studies option, so that the state can easily provide them with a job at the end of their studies.

As mentioned above, the pedagogic high schools recruit barely 1/5 of their German graduates each year. This situation, added to the teaching programs as they are currently designed, only leads to a growing rate of underemployment and even inactivity among German language graduates. If universities continue to multiply or reproduce teachers without they later being in a position to exercise a profession, to have a job on completion of their training, then the universities are directly contributing to the unemployment of the students, precisely in the case of German studies as they are currently presented in Cameroonian universities.

Till this point, we can see that the universities are not doing enough to professionalize their products, especially in the German studies. Indeed, as Dimi,

Il ne s'agit plus uniquement pour l'enseignant de dispenser des connaissances et de matérialiser ses recherches par des publications, mais de former l'étudiant à un emploi : au sortir de la Faculté, il doit être opérationnel. En ce sens, le système LMD constitue une véritable révolution copernicienne que chaque étudiant et chaque enseignant doivent faire. Cette exigence se fonde sur un constat : les Facultés des Lettres étaient devenues des boîtes de formation de chômeurs.<sup>[14]&[15]</sup>.

This observation was already made by Charles Robert Dimi in 2014. In fact we think that even if the system has been changed or improved, this improvement hardly felt in the German departments because the rate of German graduates in a situation of underemployment is growing. It makes no sense to think that if you study German (language, literature and culture) and obtain a Bachelor's, Master's or Doctorate degree, you will become a street trader, an employee in a small sewing or hairdressing salon, a temporary employee in a school or a childcare worker among more other jobs. Studying German should give you access to a job that takes account of your intellectual level and developed competences. With this in mind, all graduates who pursue a career in fields that in no way relate to their academic curriculum, and whose remuneration does not allow them to live comfortably, are in our opinion considered to be "unemployed" in the context of this work.

To conclude this section, it is important to remember that universities need to get closer to the business world in order to improve the integration of graduates into the job market. Closer links between universities and the business world will make it easier to understand employers' needs and to train students to meet those needs.

## TEACHING METHODS

In a context such as in Cameroon, the ‘guidance counsellor or advisor’ option is only available at vocational schools such as ENS. Bearing in mind that 98% of students embark on their professional lives without going to ENS, it is understandable that it is not easy for a student to get in touch with an advisor, as the term is not widely known in the university context. As there isn’t always enough time for lectures, teachers devote them to making better progress with their courses and don’t have enough time to devote to advising students on their professional careers. But we also think that if the programs are designed to meet the demands of the workforce, the time available will not be a problem for teachers in carrying out their duties.

### 5.1- Prioritization of lectures and frontal method

In Cameroonian universities, the teaching/learning methods used specifically in the language department are lectures and group work, with the emphasis on lectures and therefore the prioritization of the frontal method.

As for the lecture method or the frontal method, we understand that the number of students per classroom does not allow some teachers to set up methods that are more interactive than lectures. The frontal method places the most importance on the teacher, as it is the teacher who is most active in oral production. There is a tendency to believe that the teacher is the singer of knowledge and that the students are just there to listen and receive knowledge. The teacher is the possessor of knowledge, the one who gives the orders, the one from who everything springs – in short, the teacher is the center of the class. Here we can quote Michael Schart and Michael Legutke, that give the teacher the central role:

Es ließe sich ein ganzes Bündel von Faktoren nennen, das sich auf den Verlauf eines Unterrichts auswirkt. Und dennoch besteht kein Zweifel daran, dass die Lehrperson die zentrale Rolle spielt. Das wissen wir aus den Forschungen zum Fremdsprachenunterricht und das können Sie sicher auch anhand vieler Erlebnisse aus Ihrer Alltagsarbeit als Lehrerin oder Lehrer bekräftigen.<sup>[16]&[17]</sup>

The main characteristic of this method is the receptive and relatively passive attitude of the learners, because they receive and produce only with great difficulty, and this represents a limitation of the lecture method. According to Gertrud Walter, „Frontalunterricht ist eine Sozialform des Lehrens und Lernens, bei der eine Lehrperson eine Lerngruppe als Einheit unterrichtet; er stellt die wichtigste Sozialform im Rahmen der Großgruppendidaktik dar»<sup>[18]&[19]</sup>. This statement shows that the frontal method saves the teacher time, as Monika Möller-Frorath states: “Frontalunterricht ist in der Tat zeitökonomisch”<sup>[20]&[21]</sup>. So several pupils are being monitored at the same time, especially as their participation is limited. It is this characteristic that explains the regular application of this method in both public and private universities, as classrooms contain large numbers of students but there is not enough time to work with them individually.

Group work is also a teaching method that is used by some teachers to enable students to become more involved in research, to enable them to make their own contribution to the construction of take-home knowledge. This way of working, to which we will refer here as the “communicative method”, involves more interaction between students. However, it should be noted that this method is not used as much as the frontal method. Some teachers collect group assignments and mark them, but do not allow students to present them orally and defend their opinions. Group work is also economical in terms of time, it allows several topics to be dealt with simultaneously. Learners are grouped in small numbers and these groups work simultaneously on different themes. At the end of the work, they submit their works and may in some cases give a short presentation to share the results of their work with members of other groups. In the wake of this research, group work that culminates in presentations is more interesting and effective because it encourages the sharing of knowledge.

## 5.2- Intellectual overload

According to Belinga, the general cycle of secondary education, like primary education, is fairly encyclopedic<sup>[22]</sup>. Following Belinga, we have to recognize that higher education is even more encyclopedic, especially when it comes to German studies, that is why we are talking here about intellectual overload.

By intellectual overload here, we mean the fact that students simultaneously receive several courses of considerable, even enormous volume. In the first year of Bachelor for example, students have around 10 courses or subjects per semester (a total of 20 subjects for a single year). Of these 10 subjects, 4 relate to the German speciality, language, literature and culture, precisely as far as the University of Dschang is concerned, because in order to study German studies you must enroll in the trilingual option (French-English-German).

Imagining a Bachelor's degree obtained by validating 60 subjects leaves one questioning what the student is ultimately competent in. It is not easy for an individual to master 20 modules per year and still be competent. However, it is out of the question for students to choose what they should focus on and neglect the other modules, because with a mark of less than 7/20 for a single component at the end of the semester, they will be forced to repeat the module and therefore the level. Faced with this situation, the student simply has to understand the basics of the courses and validate everything, which will enable him or her to have at least a 10/20 average at the end of the year.

Seen from this angle, this intellectual overload does not favour the student whose aim is to put his know-how to good use, because he has no real know-how. Far from having no know-how, this learner also has no knowledge that can really be put to good use in society, which is dominated above all by competitiveness. If learners concentrate on understanding only the basics of a course in order to achieve even a 10/20 average, then they are not doing enough work for those who want to be professionally competitive. The organization and the timetables of university's teaching can also make it difficult, or even impossible, for students who have an income-generating activity to ensure their financial security and to continue their studies at the same time. In some cases, this situation leads to the expulsion of students who are unable to conciliate their studies with their work.

It's in situations like these that students are tempted to ask themselves what was the point of attending all those years if they can't achieve their goals. However, we must recognize that the failure of graduates on the job market is not only the result of their insufficient efforts, but also and above all that of programs that are not adapted to the needs of Cameroonian society. This situation leads us to work on re-territorialization in the form of contextualization and professionalization.

## CONCLUSION

At the end of this work, one can easily say that the lessons taught in German departments in the different universities in Cameroun are highly theoretical. This work has been carried out in order to know where the unemployability problem is located. We have discovered that graduates with more technical competences are highly employed than those from letters. In Cameroon as in any other country, competences are highly requested in the labour market than simple degrees. We have worked with 80 student exercising at least one incomes generating activity and we have noticed more than the majority has made a complementary training, after they obtained their Bachelor or Master's degree.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Auswärtiges Amt "Deutsch als Fremdsprache weltweit, Datenerhebung 2020".

2. Belinga, Fleur. (2015). «Le système éducatif au Cameroun », Collectif d'Aide à la Scolarisation des Enfants en Afrique, <http://casea-asso.over-blog.com/2015/10/le-systeme-educatif-au-cameroun.html>, consulted le 25 février 2023 à 18h57min
3. Dimi, Charles Robert. (2014) « Le système LMD et la professionnalisation : L'Expérience de la Faculté des lettres et sciences de l'Université de Dschang », A.F.E.L.S.H.
4. Fricke, Uwe & Wuttikraikrieng, Rassamee. (2016). Asiatische Germanistentagung „Curriculumentwicklung in der thailändischen Germanistik aus Sicht von Lehrenden und Studierenden. Séoul
5. Gouaffo, Albert. (2011). « Afrikabezogene Bildungsprogramme und Förderung des Deutschunterrichts und der Germanistik im frankophonen subsaharischen Afrika: Bilanz und Perspektiven der auswärtigen Kultur- und Bildungspolitik Deutschlands am Beispiel Kameruns ». Zeitschrift für Interkulturellen Fremdsprachenunterricht Didaktik und Methodik im Bereich Deutsch als Fremdsprache, Jahrgang 16, Nummer 2
6. Manto Jonte, Justine Juliette. (2014). Déterminants sociocognitifs des comportements de recherche d'emploi chez les diplômés de l'enseignement supérieur : comparaison France-Cameroun. Université de Yaoundé I et de Grenoble
7. Möller-Frorath, Monika. (2016). «Interaktion im Unterricht : Sozialformen, Übungen und Aufgaben» in Brinitzer, Michaela & alli., Daf Unterrichten: Basiswissen Didaktik Deutsch als Fremd- und Zweitsprache, Stuttgart: Ernst Klett, pp 35-49.
8. Schart, Michael & Legutke, Michael. (2012). Lehrkompetenz und Unterrichtsgestaltung, Stuttgart: Klett
9. Tchomga, Philippe, Kuété, Martin, & Schamp, Eike. « Suivi – évaluation des diplômés de la faculté des lettres et sciences humaines de l'Université de Dschang au Cameroun et problématique de leur insertion en milieu professionnel », AFELSH, Université de Dschang, <https://afelsh.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/07-Tchoma-Philippe-MEF1.pdf>, consulted on February, 25, 2023, 16:10mins
10. Walter, Gertrud. (2003). «Frontalunterricht» in MELZER BURWITZ, Eva & alli., Handbuch Fremdsprachenunterricht, 4. Auflage, Francke, pp251-253.
11. [africultures.com/andre-ekama-un-ecrivain-camerounais-prime-en-allemand-9411/](https://africultures.com/andre-ekama-un-ecrivain-camerounais-prime-en-allemand-9411/), consulté le 06 février 2023 à 06h51min
12. <https://www.cameroon-tribune.cm/article.html/33585/fr.html/professionnalisation-enseignements-loffre-facultes-classiques>, consulted on February 20, 2022, 17:35mins

## USED QUESTIONNAIRE

- Quelle est la période de vos études en Allemand ?
- Quel est votre niveau académique concernant les études en Allemand ? Licence  Master  Doctorat
- Quels étaient vos objectifs en étudiant la langue allemande ? La maîtrise de plusieurs langues  L'enseignement  La traduction  Le journalisme  Le commerce  L'intégration sociale  Autres (à préciser)
- Avez-vous fait autre étude/suivi une formation en dehors de l'Allemand ? OUI  NON
- Si avez fait autre étude / suivi une autre formation quelles étaient vos motivations pour cette autre étude? La rareté d'emploi avec les études germaniques  Le désir d'être polyvalent  Le besoin d'élargir le champ d'action professionnel  Autres (à préciser)
- Qu'êtes-vous de profession actuellement ? Professeur de Lycée/collège (PLEG)  Enseignant vacataire de Lycée/collège  Enseignant dans un centre linguistique  Fondateur/Directeur (PDG) d'un centre linguistique  Traducteur  Journaliste  Commerçant  Transporteur  Agriculteur  Secrétaire  Coiffeuse/couturière  Autres (à préciser)
- Depuis combien de temps exercez-vous cette profession ?
- Travaillez-vous sur la base d'un contrat écrit ? OUI  NON
- Avez-vous eu cet emploi ou mis sur pieds cette entreprise en rapport avec vos études en Allemand ? OUI  NON

- Si non quels sont les éléments qui vous ont permis d’y parvenir ?
- Quelle est la tranche de votre salaire mensuel (en FCFA) ? 0 – 50 000  51 – 100 000  101 000 – 150 000  151 000 – 200 000  201 000 – 300 000  >300 000
- Etes-vous actuellement au Cameroun ? OUI  NON
- Si non dans quel pays et pour combien de temps ?
- Qu’est-ce qui vous a poussé à y aller ? Les études  La recherche d’emploi  Les loisirs  La visite familiale  Autres (à préciser) :
- Que pensaient vos camarades (au Secondaire) de la filière allemande ? Option pour les braves  Option pour les faibles  Autres (à préciser) :
- Que pensez-vous des études germaniques au Cameroun ? Appportent un plus dans la recherche de l’emploi  Ne facilitent pas l’accès à l’emploi des étudiants germanistes  Ne sont pas si important si l’objectif visé est d’avoir un meilleur emploi

### Autres (à préciser) :

[1] [africultures.com/andre-ekama-un-ecrivain-camerounais-prime-en-allemande-9411/](https://africultures.com/andre-ekama-un-ecrivain-camerounais-prime-en-allemande-9411/), consulted February 06, 2023, 06:51mins

[2] Our translation: I wanted to give hope to emigrants by choosing the character of Okomje who goes from gastronomy to the mayor’s office in Wamsbuk. This situation may have seemed utopian in 2007, the year my book was published, but things have changed since then. More and more emigrants are becoming involved in political parties in Germany, and some sit as elected members of the federal parliament or as local councillors. Cultural mixing is no longer a fiction in Germany. We are living it. The foreign population is expressing its desire to be listened to and to value its presence. They have the right to be heard and to assert themselves in politics, just as they contribute to Germany’s development. [...] I talk about corruption in our societies and many people laugh when I read about it, even though we are all victims of the excesses of certain civil servants who charge for their services even though they are servants of the State. In Cameroon we say, “What are we going to do about it?”

[3] <https://www.cameroon-tribune.cm/article.html/33585/fr.html/professionnalisation-enseignements-loffre-facultes-classiques>, consulted on February 20, 2022, 17:35mins

[4] Fricke, Uwe; Wuttikraikrieng, Rassamee; *Asiatische Germanistentagung „Curriculumentwicklung in der thailändischen Germanistik aus Sicht von Lehrenden und Studierenden“*, Séoul, 2016, P13

[5] Our translation : “Literature ? Most of people don’t need it daily. If it is not for scientific work, nobody needs it. (Student 22)”

[6] FRICKE, Uwe & WUTTIKRAIKRIENG, Rassamee, *Asiatische Germanistentagung „Curriculumentwicklung in der thailändischen Germanistik aus Sicht von Lehrenden und Studierenden*, Séoul, 2016, p 9

[7] Our translation: “I find most universities in Thailand teach literature and linguistics the most. Yes, but rarely German for work, German for business, German for tourism. And I thought, this is the only university here that teaches German as a major professional subject. And we are supposed to teach German for work here, unlike in Bangkok.(teacher.6)”

[8] MANTO JONTE, Justine Juliette, *Déterminants sociocognitifs des comportements de recherche d’emploi chez les diplômés de l’enseignement supérieur : comparaison France-Cameroun*, Université de Yaoundé I et de Grenoble, 2014, p32-33



- [9] Our translation: “Unfortunately, once they have completed their studies, very few students are able to enter the world of work straight away; many have no idea of their actual skills in relation to the requirements of the labour market, and therefore rely exclusively on their diploma to prove their level of study. This attitude is not conducive to their social and professional integration, given that, generally speaking, companies require graduates for their productivity, but specifically those who are prepared for practical implementation, and therefore operational immediately. Very often, young graduates are faced with a gap between the training they have received and the concrete outlets or prospects offered to them by society.”
- [10] TCHOMGA, Philippe, KUÉTÉ, Martin, & SCHAMP, Eike, « Suivi – évaluation des diplômés de la faculté des lettres et sciences humaines de l’Université de Dschang au Cameroun et problématique de leur insertion en milieu professionnel », *AFELSH*, Université de Dschang, <https://afelsh.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/07-Tchoma-Philippe-MEF1.pdf>, consulted on February 25, 2023, 16:10mins
- [11] Ours translation: “In addition to the inadequacy of the content, there is the commercialism of the teachers who teach them. In many cases, the courses created in the programmes were created to improve their salaries. What’s more, the number of extra teaching hours far exceeds the number of regular teaching hours”.
- [12] GOUAFFO, Albert, « Afrikabezogene Bildungsprogramme und Förderung des Deutschunterrichts und der Germanistik im frankophonen subsaharischen Afrika: Bilanz und Perspektiven der auswärtigen Kultur- und Bildungspolitik Deutschlands am Beispiel Kameruns », *Zeitschrift für Interkulturellen Fremdsprachenunterricht Didaktik und Methodik im Bereich Deutsch als Fremdsprache*, Jahrgang 16, Nummer 2, 2011, p118
- [13] Our translation: The Maîtrise funding was accompanied by doctoral funding for particularly qualified African German teachers. It was not just about training and further training of African German teachers, but also about enabling the German departments in the 14 Francophone African countries to one day be able to train German teachers themselves.
- [14] DIMI, Charles Robert, « Le système LMD et la professionnalisation : L’Expérience de la Faculté des lettres et sciences de l’Université de Dschang », *A.F.E.L.S.H.*, 2014
- [15] Our translation: It is no longer just a matter of teachers imparting knowledge and producing publications, but of training students for a job: they must be operational by the time they leave university. In this sense, the LMD system constitutes a veritable Copernican revolution that every student and every teacher must undertake. This demand is based on one observation: the Faculties of Arts had become training centers for the unemployed
- [16] SCHAT, Michael & LEGUTKE, Michael, *Lehrkompetenz und Unterrichtsgestaltung*, Klett, Stuttgart, 2012, p6
- [17] Notre traduction : There are a whole bunch of factors that affect the course of a lesson. And yet there is no doubt that the teacher plays the central role. We know this from research into foreign language teaching and you can certainly confirm this based on many experiences from your everyday work as a teacher
- [18] WALTER, Gertrud, « Frontalunterricht » in MELZER BURWITZ, Eva & alli., *Handbuch Fremdsprachenunterricht*, 4. éd, Francke 2003, pp251-253, p 251
- [19] Our translation : Frontal teaching is a social form of teaching and learning in which a teacher teaches a learning group as a unit; it represents the most important social form in the context of large group didactics

[20]MÖLLER-FRORATH, Monika, «Interaktion im Unterricht : Sozialformen, Übungen und Aufgaben»in BRINITZER, Michaela & alli., *Daf Unterrichten: Basiswissen Didaktik Deutsch als Fremd- und Zweitsprache*, Stuttgart, Ernst Klett, 2016, pp 35-49, p38

[21]Our translation :” Frontal teaching is indeed time-efficient”

[22]BELINGA, Fleur, « Le système éducatif au Cameroun », Collectif d’Aide à la Scolarisation des Enfants en Afrique, 2015, <http://casea-asso.over-blog.com/2015/10/le-systeme-educatif-au-cameroun.html>, consulted on February, 25, 2023, 18:57 mins