

Competency-Based Approach and Writing Skills Development in Cameroon Secondary Schools

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine how competency-based approach influences of writing skills development in Cameroon secondary schools. The coherence of the didactics of writing, as a subdiscipline of the didactics of French, comes from the analysis and description of teaching and learning writing at secondary school, where “French” as a discipline contains, along with grammar, spelling, reading, literature. It adopted a descriptive survey research design. Random sampling method was used to sample 12 secondary schools and study respondents from the accessible population of the study. A sample of 276 respondents comprising 12 principals and 48 teachers and 216 form 3 students was used for the study. Questionnaires, interviews and observation schedules were used to collect data from the respondents. Reliability of the instruments was established through test re-test method. A Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.75$) thus the instruments were internally consistent and would test what is required to be tested. The findings indicate that the competency-based approach influences of writing skills development in Cameroon secondary schools.

Keywords: competency- based; writing skills; secondary school; Cameroon

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the most costly and complex cognitive tasks and involves various cognitive processes such as interpreting text (internal representations of linguistic and graphic data, revision), thinking, generating linguistic structures, evaluating how the text will be understood by the reader, solving problems (including planning), making decisions, and producing inferences. The main cognitive processes identified in writing include planning, translating, and reviewing (Godfrey, 2022). Planning allows ideas to be generated while relating them to the specific context of textual production. Translating allows for the elaboration of semantic representations into linguistic structures and graphic forms. Finally, reviewing is a control operation on the text. Other processes come into play, such as problem-solving (including planning), decision-making and the production of inferences (Lin, Liu & Chen, 2022), all of which are carried out within long-term memory and the task environment.

Literacy education is a major concern in Cameroon. Both writing and reading are the foundation of successful learning at school. Particularly as for writing skills, many continue to presume that writing is a language skill that children must be taught with planned systematic instructions and accordingly they demand a formal education for their young children's literacy. Formal teaching of how to read and write without considering their developmental characteristics have increased (Kim and Kwak, 2016).

Researchers and educators have learned fresh insights into how kids learn to write in their first language over the years. Researchers in second language training are questioning their conventional assumptions and approaches in light of this and related findings. (Yombouno, 2014).

At the same time, the advantages of humanistic and child-centered learning are being examined and appreciated by many educators as the most effective way to meet the needs of all learners. Learning to read has been generally and traditionally understood to precede learning to write. Writing teachers would typically present discrete amounts of language in a planned sequence based on words that the children were presumed to be able to read, and language concepts that they would probably be able to grasp. All the children in the same class would listen to the explanation, and then the teaching points would be reinforced through a variety of reductionist workbook activities or other exercise (Delebarre, 2022). Writing assignments would be selected to be appropriate to the level of reading mastery and age of the students who were assumed to be known and common. The activities might involve writing answer to objective questions. They might be writing a short paragraph or story. Letters might be written to an imaginary friend. Syntactical, spelling and punctuation errors would be indicated in the teacher's correction of work. Problems in word choice might be noted. A mark would probably be assigned (Saracho, 2017).

Writing instruction is beginning to change, particularly in the classes of younger children. Students in the classroom working individually or with partners, and using a variety of materials, as they represent their thoughts through illustrations, stories, letters, plays, poems, summaries, and so forth. The composing they are doing may or may not be related to a common stimulus. The amount of writing produced is generally greater than in the past. Students may compare their work with others for response and revision suggestions. Work is likely kept in portfolios or displayed in a variety of ways including possibly in published form in the school library. It may or may not be characterized by standard spelling, punctuation, or syntax. It may appear not to have been marked.

This philosophy of learning to write (and listen, speak and read), an overriding theory and point of view about language, literacy and content learning (El Houdna, 2017).

The didactics of writing concerns the development of skills related to the sentence as much as those related to the text. The production of writing, the framework in which the present research takes place, concerns the teaching of sentence grammar, but also that of the overall structuring of texts. It is interested in the meeting of teaching and learning around an object of knowledge and refers to the development of writing skills. It is no longer limited to developing skills based on the rules of sentence structuring. The teaching of French also deals with the rules of interstitial organization and the linguistic and pragmatic factors that determine its coherence. As a result, the skills to be acquired relate to the grammatical rules of the sentence, but also to the knowledge that leads to the production of a coherent text according to a particular enunciative context and a communicative intention. Thus, the notions of textual cohesion and textual coherence have taken on a great deal of importance in French didactics (Craig & McKinney, 2010).

Competency Based-Approach (CBA) has acquired popularity recently in the academic community. In fact, it is no longer in style to impart knowledge or apply specialized knowledge through instruction. It is essentially required that students encounter challenging situations that they must resolve. Using this method, the learner will not only gain knowledge but also be able to use it meaningfully in a variety of social, professional, and even personal settings. As a result of this transformation, teaching methods have undergone significant shift as teachers now serve as genuine intermediaries between students and knowledge. Following experience with programs by content and objective, secondary schools in Cameroon made the decision to follow the CBA's path in order to accomplish this competency objective. This change is significant because it highlights the issue of whether or not teachers have received the necessary training to meet the requirements of the new system. This conundrum serves as the foundation for the article, which explores the numerous avenues via which instructors pick up the knowledge and abilities necessary for using CBA as well as the difficulties they encounter in doing so.

The present research deals specifically with the problem of evaluation of written productions. Although evaluation in language didactics has so far focused mainly on the observation of the learner's behavior, our study is part of an evaluation approach that is still little used. In fact, our assessment inquiry places the teacher at the center of the process. Indeed, text pedagogy requires not only the development of ways to improve students' text production, but also corrective action on the part of teachers. Such assessment-related conduct can involve both the content and form of writing. The purpose of this study is to understand how teachers assess students' language skills, skills that fall under the rules of text writing (good text quality). The term refers to good text design, the creation of structured and complete texts. The research question guiding this thesis is as follows: Can the CBA program enable the development of writing skills in Cameroonian secondary education?

BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE

When efforts were made to change teacher education and training in the 1960s in the United States of America, the modern competency-based education and training movements got their start (Hodges & Harris, 2012). The Competency Based Approach (CBA) is a brand-new idea in the educational system of Cameroon. The gradual transition from the Objective Based Approach (OBA), also known as the communicative approach (CA), to the CBA throughout

the years has been facilitated by the change in the educational paradigm in Cameroon. The CBA is currently utilized in public secondary schools across the nation. The current trend from the OBA to the CBA, according to Tabe (2019), should typically be accompanied by changes to the syllabus approach, course objectives, material designing, and more specifically instructional material development, which many researchers like Nalova (2021) and Guyomar (1989) recognized to be trivial and a problem area for teachers. There isn't a single accepted definition of this term in use, as there is with every novel concept. The learner's active participation in all areas of information acquisition, skill development, and professional behavior that must be displayed and performed in a given discipline is crucial to the success of the CBA. CBA can also be thought of as competency-based education (CBE), competency-based education and training (CBET), competency-based learning (CBL), competency-based instruction (CBI), and competency-based programs, according to Bashar Dean (2023). (CBP). Also, it is comparable to the Performance Based Approach (PBA).

There is no widely acknowledged practical definition for the term "competence," according to Garavan & McGuire (2001). They define competence as "an action, behavior, or consequence which a person should be able to exhibit". This term emphasizes what a person is capable of (output). Competence, according to Kirschner et al. (1997), is the capacity to select and apply the attitudes, knowledge, and skills required for performance at a chosen level.

The Cameroon Ministry of Basic Education (2004) identified three key elements of the competence to be taught: subject competence (knowledge), transversal competence (knowledge resulting from all the subjects in a child's learning), and life competence, which is the result of the development of the right attitudes, behavior, and problem-solving skills for real-life situations. For his part, Richard (2006) describes the CBA's objectives and their nature. To him, goals are divided into more specific subgoals so that teachers and pupils can both see how they are doing. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), each approach requires particular teaching resources in order to achieve the goal of its basis. Therefore, for the CBA to be effectively implemented, the instructional materials must be those that can inspire students, convey information in an engaging manner, bring real-world scenarios and cultural information into the classroom, give students real-world exposure to the target language, and satisfy student needs. The learner-centered strategy, which places emphasis on the learning process, is one that the CBA supports.

Several characteristics of a learner-centered approach are highlighted by Field and Drysdale (1991), including the use of customized resources, adaptable learning schedules, and ongoing feedback. In this context, CBA implementation should make sure that the learning process incorporates all facets of a learner-centered approach. Hence, the CBA's learning environment is focused on helping students enhance their competencies at the conclusion of any study program (Kirschner et al, 1997).

School must cultivate in the child the ability to live and share with others while allowing him to develop as an autonomous, free, critical and creative being. In the text Education hides a treasure (Delors, 1996), four pillars of education are outlined as challenges for the future : knowing, knowing how to do, knowing how to be and knowing how to live together. Thanks to these principles, human beings will be able to express themselves as individuals who are part of a community where the ability to live together is a fundamental achievement.

According to this document, from the earliest childhood, education must take advantage of every opportunity to develop its dual mission, which is to teach the diversity of our species and to develop values such as autonomy. This is to bring the child to be able to determine by himself how to act and face the various circumstances that life presents him (Gravelle, Masse-Lamarche, Monette, Gagnon, Montreuil & Lachance Demers, 2022). The essence of each of these pillars (Delors, 1996) suggests the importance of implementing foreign languages in schools. These pillars can be easily and widely worked on and developed. Knowing how to do allows one to equip oneself with the tools that will enable understanding, communication and openness to others. Knowing how to participate and influence the world around us.

Knowing how to live together facilitates active participation and cooperation with others in dialogue and respect for diversity, thus avoiding any form of discrimination thanks to the discovery of the differences of the other. Knowing how to be is an essential and global knowledge that gathers elements of other knowledge. Foreign languages are important to teach young people to understand the point of view of other ethnic groups in order to avoid misunderstandings that lead to various conflicts and forms of violence among adults because "the didactic enterprise, supported by the achievement of cognitive, psychomotor and affective objectives should logically lead to the pleasure of the text in the well-understood sense of the relationships between text, context and culture" (Ethe, Mebenga & Ze, 2016, p. 25). In spite of the variety of contextual realities, the pedagogical and technical structures focus the praxeology on "books", the "pleasure of reading", the autonomy of "reading and writing", in order to grasp the internal dynamics of the work. (Frédérique Denis, 1993). An article by Georges and Christiane Courad, published in 1978, is one of the precursors that reveals the extent of the impact of historical responsibility on the Cameroonian educational system :

The educational system sets up during the colonial era is the one that functioned until 1972 after 1972 after having undergone some adjustments. It is of liberal inspiration. It has nothing to do with the educational machine developed by Jules Ferry, heavy, bureaucratic, hypercentralized, that France bequeathed to its former colonies. The system, on this side of the Mungo, is flexible, decentralized, pragmatic. It does not pretend to lock teachers into a straitjacket of rigid of rigid texts, often applied indiscriminately by a generally fussy hierarchy. generally fussy hierarchy. If the francophone teaching system, by tying up its teachers, gives a generally mediocre education teachers, gives a generally mediocre education, the Anglophone system can give a frankly system can give a frankly bad or excellent education. It trusts the teachers and leaves the pedagogical initiative to them (Courade and Courade, 1978, pp. 746-747).

To give a new dynamism to the Cameroonian oral and written literary education, it is therefore necessary to break with the colonial model which privileges structures and infrastructures that do not always meet the needs of this literary category. The Cameroonian society of today is listening to the process of inalienable globalization, while trying to satisfy the identity needs of its population, especially the youngest. Uprooted from their origins and their illusory desire for a better place.

Academic institutions will combine their own strategies with existing ones to re-establish an educational framework that is as open as possible to these different demands, following the path of syncretism that has certainly been underway since the invasion of Cameroon by the West. Today's schools are modern, but they also respect the culture and social realities of the place. In the process of growing cosmopolitanism, radical Western or Eastern trends in education are obsolete. The only possible perspective for the realization of a young Cameroonian today is an educational policy that integrates the demands of his daily life, especially in relation to what he is and what he aspires to be.

Since the didactics of French was constituted as a field of research, the the question of teaching literature has always been central. Concerning the teaching of literature, the didactics of French is essentially a field of theoretical essentially a field of theoretical discussions which relate as well to the status of the status of the teachable objects and the conditions of their teachability as well as the the conditions of the theoretical tools allowing the approach of these objects (Daunay, 2007, p. 1).

In this regard, the major objectives of the teaching of literature in Cameroon include rootedness and openness: The objectives selected and pursued are in line with the realities and requirements of Cameroonian society today. They determine teaching contents that also take into account the needs and interests of students limited by recognized standards. In short, it is a matter of training a young Cameroonian with universal values universal values, strongly impregnated with the socio-cultural values of his country, but also able to open up to the outside world and integrate harmoniously into it (MINEDUC, 1995, p.7).

The aim is for the student to;

To acquire knowledge, know-how and interpersonal skills that can be transferred to new situations; to acquire the culture necessary for professional life and life in society; to become an educated person, i.e. capable of exercising his or her judgment, critical mind, spirit of analysis and synthesis, and creative faculties; to understand the environment in which he or she is called upon to live and to participate fully in the life of his or her time; to form his or her personality, to express his or her own culture and to understand the culture of others, thanks to activities that ensure his or her openness of mind: readings, theaters, cinema (MINEDUC, 1995).

But if it is interesting to note how oral teachings in Cameroon ignore certain contextual realities, they are now indispensable in the knowledge and understanding of the culture from which these texts come. Without hesitation, let us recall the contextualization efforts that have been and claim to be made under the reign of written literature. A myriad of approaches has been developed for this purpose intermediaries, interdisciplinary, intercultural and other metalanguages.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Vienneau states that there are common factors that have a clear influence on learners' learning. These factors are : the family environment; the socioeconomic level, the parents' level of education, the motivation or the intellectual capacities of the learners. In addition to this, there are currently factors related to the learning methods used, the qualities of strategies used (Afkhani Nia & Nassirzadeh, 2022 ; Vienneau, 2011, pp. 22,23).

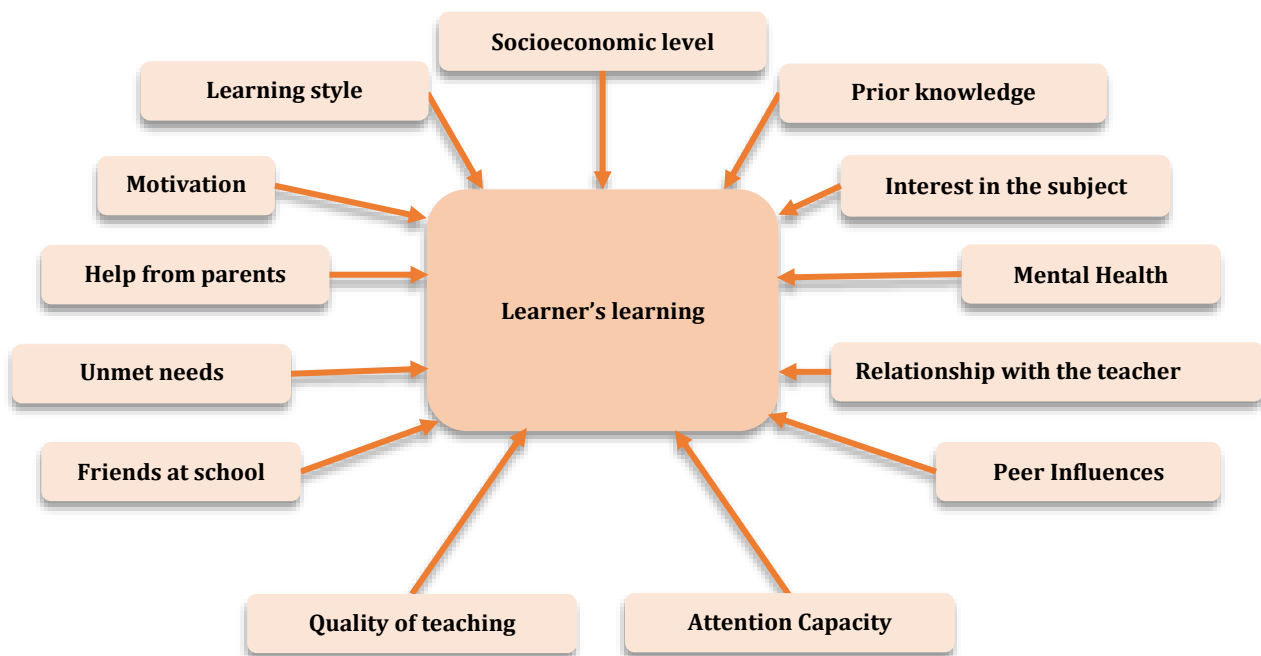


FIGURE 1: Factors of learning.

Source: (Afkhani Nia & Nassirzadeh, 2022 ; Vienneau, 2011, pp. 22,23).

This pattern is of great interest to our study, in what follows, we will attempt to identify the notion of learning via the different models presented by theorists. All activities related to this educational discipline aim to take charge of the motor behavior, cognitive abilities and affective well-being of students (Denis & Varenne, 2019).

The SCI Model of Learning

In what follows, we identify the notion of learning via the different models presented by theorists. All activities related to this educational discipline aim to take charge of the motor behavior, cognitive abilities and affective well-being of students (Denis & Varenne, 2019). This proposed model consists of three dimensions :

- The S dimension : the socio dimension consists of functions related to social interactions between the learner, the teacher and other learners.
- The C dimension : constructivist dimension inherent to the functions related to the learner himself/herself and concerns the organization of learning by the learner.
- The I dimension : interactive dimension, includes functions related to the environment, notably the learning situation and its content.

These three dimensions are closely interwoven through an interactive process. This model makes it possible to situate the writing activity in a whole that draws on three factors, namely social, interactive and constructivist, in such a way that the learner manages to write well by presenting texts related to his daily life. Thus, he will build his writing learning by interacting with other learners or with his teacher.

Constructivism

We are going to expose the definitions given in the dictionaries of education or psychology. Learning is : "Putting or becoming aware of information ; integrating, assimilating, incorporating new data into an already existing internal cognitive structure ; acquiring and developing knowledge and skills, integrating information into a structure that exists in memory, and using that information whenever the situation requires it." (Becerril-Ortega, 2022, p. 35).

"(...) The purpose of learning is: the acquisition of habits (mainly in the motor domain and then tends to the creation of automatisms), and the acquisition of knowledge." (Lafont-Terranova, 2009, p. 47).

In general, individual change is the ability to perform a task as a result of interactions with the environment. Depending on the context, the term refers to the process or the outcome of the process. It is generally understood that the change consists of progress (Grand dictionnaire de la psychologie, 1991, p. 58).

From these three definitions, we can cite that learning requires the integration of knowledge and the use of this knowledge in a situation. But also, learning involves the integration of behaviors and aims at a certain automatism. The aim of learning is evolution or progression. These definitions interest us because they contain key notions in the process and help us to situate the activity of written production in the learning process. Through these key concepts, we can ask ourselves whether we can properly identify the writing process in the FFL classroom as a learning act that allows progression or not (Jonnaert and Vander, 1999, p. 249).

Cognitivism

Learning is :

"To constitute high order representations and to modify the relations that unite them. Learning depends on the cognitive level insofar as the latter conditions the knowledge and know-how that can be "activated" in each situation. And conversely, learning is built on the knowledge and know-how mobilized by the situation" (Villepontoux, 2015, pp. 13-14).

"(...) The cognitivist view of learning insists on the importance of prior knowledge: knowledge is not constructed from nothing; this construction presupposes existing knowledge" (Richard, 1990, pp. 159-160).

"Learning is change in the ability to perform a task as a result of interaction with the environment. It is distinct from behavioral changes that occur as a result of maturation (...)" (Houde & Jordan, 1998, p. 43).

From these three situations, we can clarify the cognitivist vision of learning which conceives it as a change operated on the basis of prerequisites also resulting from an interaction with the learner's environment. Learning is also a matter of constituting various mental images and modifying the links between them (Jonnaert and Vander, 1999, p. 253). This cognitivist conception of learning seems to us to be of great importance because it makes it possible to locate learning as a process of modification brought about in the individual. From there, we can ask ourselves about learning to write according to this cognitivist view, since this cognitive current perceives the learner's activity as essential for the construction of knowledge. If we apply this conception to learning to write, we realize that the learner must, during a writing activity, process the information he or she has and relate it to what he or she is reading in order to be able to learn to write later on.

Historically, writing has been the object of several positions that govern its teaching-learning mode, which are varied according to the time and the need. However, a place for the written word remains preponderant and highlights an urgent social need for this activity, considered for many years as complex and delicate. In turn, the methods used to teach or learn it are of varying concern to didactic research in order to flatten the pitfalls so often encountered in the written production of a text. In what follows, we will shed some light on the treatment of writing as a teachable object by exposing the works carried out in this field as well as the different modes used to teach or learn such a competence of written production which remains the interest of our practical part.

Historically, the 1960s emphasized the teaching of oral language. The 1970s were able to put the oral and the written word on the same line of interest. With the advent of communicative approaches, the place of the written word was challenged thus, metamorphoses occurred, including the constitution of didactics as an independent discipline (Colognesi, Tourtier & Wyls, 2019).

We are witnessing a fluctuation centered on the emergence of an independent discipline in the process of being constituted. As a result, numerous works have emerged over time, and the evolution of many linguistic theories has had an impact on the teaching of French as a foreign language, both in writing and in speaking. In the field of writing, importance is given to orthography seen as a plural system (Brunel, Dufays, Brun-Lacour, & Fontanieu, 2020). In the oral field, interest is focused on spoken French. The contribution of pragmatics and cognitive sciences has also favored the study of language in its context of communication and enunciation (Buridant, Pellat & Bunjevac, 1994, p. 78).

With the research on typologies, didactics subsumes various theories on contrastive studies. Interculturality is advocated because of the coexistence of several languages in Cameroon. Technological mutations have also had a flagrant effect on the teaching-learning of the written word, which is becoming intimately linked to the spoken word, far from the familiar structures in a perspective splashed by Kaïm, who insists on teaching based on the use of structures common to the written and spoken word (Kaïm, 2020).

However, there are particular contexts of writing that have given rise to a great deal of research on learning. We cite the example of Moirand (1979) in "situations d'écrit" (writing situations), to which several works proposing learning methods and processes follow. It is in this last axis of research that our study attempts to contribute to research in didactics by bringing a fruitful process for the learning of written production.

Furthermore, Moirand's (1990) work, "A Grammar of Texts and Dialogues" is central because it supports our idea of the thesis and it announces the premises of the generation of a grammar of texts that is not prescriptive but explanatory of the structure of texts, made available to the written word, seen as having a social purpose, it has been rethought as a social object whose objective is to transmit a message with a communicative purpose (p. 8)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Both qualitative and quantitative data were employed in the study. To accomplish the goals of this research, the major data source was used to gather first-hand knowledge. The initial data came mostly from a questionnaire. To the responders, 276 (100%) questionnaires were given out, including 36 (75%) instructors and 9 (75%) pedagogic inspectors. Additionally, the study's associated journals and research articles were examined in order to clarify the issues and construct logical frameworks.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Since 2014, Cameroon has undergone a notable change in pedagogy, adopting the CBA as the pedagogical method in force both at the level of basic education and secondary education. In basic education, the CBA presents real life situations and in secondary school, it is rather a question of another variant of the CBA. This has implications in the whole teaching-learning process of french since 2018 that CBA came practical in scodnary school and especially at the level of the different parameters of the didactic action.

It is then appropriate to focus on the docimological parameter, in other words on the level of the evaluation of competences and more precisely on the structure of the test according to the CBA. This oblige us to examine the very first french test in an official exam in the CBA paradigm in the O'level period of general secondary education. The purpose of this critical examination is to underline the good points but also the defects of this first test of its kind, and especially to propose measures of correction, better of improvement in order to contribute to the improvement of this test for the examinations to come.

Since it is no longer just a question of evaluating the performance of learners in the sense of the pedagogical objective base approach but evaluating all their competences. In other words their aptitudes and attitudes to write. This favors the CBA which interests us in particular and which is situated precisely within the framework of the new practices.

TABLE 1: Using CBA to teach writing production.

Using CBA to Teach Writing Production					
Respondents	Responses				
	Yes	%	No	%	Yes
Principals	2	22.2	07	77.8	2
Teachers	6	16.7	30	83.3	6
Totals	8	38.9	37	161.1	8

According to results in Table 1, 77.8% of the principal's respondents indicated not to have any applied CBA in teaching writing production while 22.2% indicated to have been teaching cohenrent text production. Among the teachers' respondents 83.3% indicated not to have any in the application of CBA in teaching writing production while 16.7% indicated to have. Majority of the principals and teachers' respondents 37(161.1%), indicated not to have to apply CBA in teaching while a minority of 8 (38.9%) indicated to have.

These finding suggests that most of the principals and the teacher’s in secondary schools in the country are not trained in using the CBA in teaching writing production. This could have affected adoption and students writing skills in teaching and learning in secondary schools. This is in line with other studies that established that schools were facing challenge of skilled teachers as they strived to adopt CBA in their respective schools (Tomassone, 2003). When we say that the student must be accompanied, we are obviously referring to the assistance provided by teachers during writing activities or more formal language learning exercises aimed at acquiring the knowledge to become competent in writing as well as convincing the student of the value of knowing the language code (Ngono, 2012).

There are several practices for teaching the language: sentence analysis, exercises to apply all kinds of agreement rules, learning lists of words to acquire automatic lists of

words to acquire automatic spelling, different forms of dictation, learning verb declensions to dictations, learning verb declensions to automate the conjugation system, use of automatic conjugations, use of automatic correctors, mutual help between peers (Eloundou, 2017).

Further, the respondents who were in agreement to having been CBA method in teaching writing skills or produce written text were requested to indicate whether they were written production in their schools. Those were using the CBA method to teach were required to indicate yes while not for those who were not using were required to indicate no. The study sought information on principals’ The perceptions of knowledge construction in teaching and learning in their respective secondary schools. A Likert scale was put in place ranging from SA=strongly agree, D= disagree, U= undecided D= disagree and SD= strongly disagree where principals were asked to tick their choices. The findings are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2: Perceptions of knowledge construction.

Item	Responses									
	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	<i>f_i</i>	%	<i>f_i</i>	%	<i>f_i</i>	%	<i>f_i</i>	%	<i>f_i</i>	%
It is essential learners are engaged in a learning exercise	1	11.1	4	44.4	0	0.0	1	11.1	3	33.3
Learners have the ability to write words correctly, taking into account capitalization and typographical convention	3	33.3	1	11.1	0	0.0	3	33.3	2	22.2
Students have the ability to read a written text well, taking into account intonation, pronunciation	1	11.1	3	33.3	0	0.0	1	11.1	5	55.6
Students have the ability to recognize and produce statements related to the functions of the language	1	11.1	4	44.4	0	0.0	1	11.1	3	33.3
Students are able to create sentences with very basic grammatical control and accuracy	1	11.1	3	33.3	0	0.0	2	22.2	3	33.3
They create enough sentences to show groupings of ideas	1	11.1	4	44.4	0	0.0	1	11.1	2	22.2

Item one is whether it is essential learners are engaged in a learning exercise, 33.3% strongly agreed 11.1% disagreed, 0% were undecided, 33.3% agreed while 22.2% strongly disagreed. This suggests that the principals had already made their minds that it is essential learners are engaged in a learning exercise with the students. Item two on learners have the ability to write words correctly, taking into account capitalization and typographical convention, 11.10% strongly agreed, 33.3% disagreed, 0% were undecided, 11.1 % agreed while 55.6% strongly disagreed. Few practices are good or bad in themselves. It is a matter of using them intelligently and wisely. For example, in the case of exercises, preference should be given to those that lead to the real construction of knowledge or those that are as close as possible to real writing situations. If dictation is used, it is important to ensure that the correction helps to transmit knowledge that the student can then transfer to other writing situations, or to allow the student to experiment with the use of certain resources such as the dictionary or spell checker.

Item thre on whether students have the ability to read a written text well, taking into account intonation, pronunciation, 11.1% of the principals’ respondents strongly

agreed, 44.4% disagreed, 0% were undecided, 11.1% agreed while 33.3% strongly disagreed. This suggests that most principals believe that students have the ability to read a written text well, taking into account intonation, pronunciation. Item four on whther Students have the ability to recognize and produce statements related to the functions of the language, 11.1% strongly agreed, 33.3% disagreed, 0% were undecided, 22.2% agreed while 33.3% strongly disagreed. Students are expected to write often, producing texts of varying lengths, whether in French class or in other subjects. In order to become a competent writer, they must take advantage of every opportunity to write and reflect on their writing. These writing contexts can become opportunities to apply learned grammar rules, to use revision and correction strategies appropriate to one’s writing profile, to learn new rules in context. Efforts should be made to look for winning practices that have been shown to have the greatest effect on students.

Item five on whether students are able to create senences with very basic grammatical control and accuracy, 11.1% of the principals’ respondents strongly agreed, 44.4% disagreed, 0% were undecided, 11.1% agreed while 22.2% strongly disagreed.

Students need feedback, encouragement, to see their progress, to know how far they have come and how far they still have to go for a given stage. The teacher's role is crucial in marking and guiding learning. Throughout this slow process of acquiring knowledge, it is important to be attentive to identifying students with special needs in order to accompany them and help them overcome their difficulties so that they can progress not only in the acquisition of the code, but also in its appropriate use in written productions. This requires a pedagogy of accompaniment and a very good sense of organization to be able to benefit from the maximum of the time allotted to teaching, which supposes that the teacher is able to this means that the most suitable teaching material (basic or complementary) must be chosen so that (basic or

supplementary) materials that are as appropriate as possible so that these tools can play their role of accompaniment. Item six on whether they create enough sentences to show groupings of ideas, 33.3% of the respondents strongly agreed, 11.1% disagreed, 33.3% agreed while 22.2 strongly disagreed. In the primary level, the time to be devoted to learning French varies according to the cycle. In the first cycle, the time allotted is nine hours per week, while in the second and third cycles it is seven hours per week. At the secondary level, it is two hundred hours per year, but this is only a guideline. Item seven is on whether there are still some errors in their writing production, 33.3% of the respondents strongly agreed, 11.1% disagreed, 33.3% agreed while 22.2 strongly disagreed.

TABLE 3: Using the CBA in written production.

Item	Responses									
	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	f ₁	%	f ₁	%	f ₁	%	f ₁	%	f ₁	%
Giving students activities contribute to the objective of writing production	6	16.7	12	33.3	0	0.0	6	16.7	12	33.3
Assignment on reading literature improves students' knowledge and writing skills	3	8.3	10	27.8	0	0.0	6	16.7	18	50.0
Students write good essays with minimum errors	2	5.6	14	38.9	0	0.0	4	11.1	16	44.4
Teaching French improves student's language knowledge and writing skills	3	8.3	12	33.3	1	2.8	8	22.2	12	33.3
Tasks given to students ties in with their realistic language competencies	6	16.7	14	38.9	2	5.6	6	16.7	8	22.2
We apply the technique of learning to write in the area of writing production	2	5.6	12	33.3	1	2.8	4	11.1	17	47.2
Students produce text with the help of a linguistic knowledge	4	11.1	16	44.4	0	0.0	6	16.7	10	27.8

Item one is whether giving students activities contribute to the objective of writing production, 16.7% strongly agreed 33.3% disagreed, 0% were undecided, 16.7% agreed while 33.3% strongly disagreed. This suggests that the if these activities are not contributive, there is concern, particularly at the secondary level, that hours lost in French will never be recovered by specialists in other disciplines during accompanied writing activities. Moreover, when this is the case, the message sent by the school or school board is pernicious, since it can be interpreted as a tacit affirmation that the hours devoted to teaching French are compressible and not necessary for the acquisition of knowledge in French. Item two on whether assignement on reading literature improves students knowledge and writing skills, 8.3% strongly agreed, 16.7% disagreed, 0% were undecided, 27.8% agreed while 50.0% strongly disagreed. French is a school subject, certainly, but it is also a way of being, of living, to define and distinguish oneself.

Item three on whether students write good essays with minimum errors, 5.6% of the respondents strongly agreed, 11.1% disagreed, 38.9% agreed while 44.4% strongly disagreed. The fact that judgments, criticisms and suggestions are coming from everywhere concerning the teaching of French says a lot about the degree of sensitivity of all social components with regard to French.

Item four is on whether teaching french improves students language knowledge and writing skills, 8.3% of the respondents strongly agreed, 22.2% disagreed, 33.3% agreed while 33.3% strongly disagreed.

Item five is whether Tasks given to students ties in with their realistic language competencies, 16.7% of the respondents strongly agreed, 16.7% disagreed, 38.9% agreed while 22.2 strongly disagreed. Item six in on whether we apply the technique of learning to write in the area of writing production, 5.6% of the respondents strongly agreed, 33.3% disagreed, 2.8% were undecided, 11.1% agreed while 47.2% strongly disagreed. Item seven is on whether students produce text with the help of a linguistic knowledge, 11.1% of the respondents strongly agreed, 11.1% disagreed, 0.0% were undecided, 44.4% agreed while 27.8% strongly disagreed. It should not be assumed, however, that secondary French teachers are solely responsible for the quality of students' written language, for the quality of students' written language. They must be supported by the whole school and the They must be supported by the school as a whole and by the school community in general if writing skills are to develop. The student must be in an environment where there is a high degree of consistency.

The understanding that language is an indispensable means of constructing one's thoughts, communicating, and developing oneself, and the constant concern for its quality, must be shared by those responsible for teaching all disciplines, by the school administration, and by all professionals working in the school environment (Maurer, 2007). In other words, writing to learn applies to all subjects. In this sense, all those responsible for teaching other disciplines are called upon to work together to use writing in their teaching, in order to ensure the development of writing skills.

But it also corollary is that those responsible for teaching subjects other than French must be that teachers of subjects other than French must also be supported in their interventions in language in the learning of the language (Nabila, 2022).

Moreover, if all of Cameroon society is concerned with the teaching of French, it follows logically that all of society must support the teaching staff in its task of transmitting knowledge in French. We have spoken of the school as a whole, but we can also think of the parents, the media in all their forms and the other social components which, each in their respective spheres of influence, can contribute to making the young people of Cameroon better speakers and better writers.

The same problems of acquiring knowledge to achieve writing and reading skills are found in all the sectors of education. Intervention in school and social adaptation is a major challenge. These teachers are asked to cover several classes and several teaching disciplines. Training programs in special education have other objectives. By wanting to train these people for everything, we don't always have the time to train them well. In this sense, we must unfortunately point out that their initial training in French is deficient and that they lack basic linguistic knowledge (Villepoux, 2015).

Evaluators of second language learning need to consider: no one piece of work or test illustrates what a student can do; evaluation should be done from a variety of perspectives; evaluation should reflect the curriculum; evaluation should reflect knowledge of the language; and, the fidelity of the assessment measurement must be assured (Wesche, 1992). Writing is now generally understood to be developmental. Providing the support for growth and assessing students to determine future learning goals are major teacher responsibilities.

In the Foreword to *Observing the Language Learner*, Dorothy Strickland writes that research points out the importance of a process approach to the evaluation of language growth... [and that] evaluation is viewed as an integral part of language instruction (Jaggar & Smith-Burke, 1985, p. v). Kidwatching is the term used to describe assessment and evaluation in the secondary school. Included in the underlying notions are that continuous education for teachers is very important, that language and concepts grow in rich and varied settings and interactions, and that knowledgeable teachers assume responsibility for observation and evaluation in order to enrich the child's development of language and concepts (p. 11). One may not have access to some features. View permissions proponents of 'whole language' are against standardized tests on the basis that they fail to test what they are presumed to test (Altwerger, Edelsky & Flores, 1987). They prefer a variety of other assessment techniques applied to the students' authentic writing. Teaching and assessment of writing, for many teachers, are two sides of the same coin. For Freedman & Sperling (1985), the one-to-one teacher and student writing conference has been seen to be a prime opportunity for a teacher to respond to a student's writing. It should also allow the teacher to assess the student's work-and therefore her needs, and in a personal way, offer new knowledge. Their research suggests that teachers must be cautious about having quantitatively and qualitatively different discussions with their students depending upon teacher preconceptions of what the students are capable of doing. Teachers need to practice exerting conscious control over those aspects of the teaching-learning process that are likely to influence what a student learns, and...[to]focus on those aspects that are likely to lead to success (pp. 128-129).

In his description of emergent writing, Hall (1987) lists the principles outlined by Clay (1975) which may be observed in the writing behaviour of students, but not in any particular order:

- (1) The sign concept - A sign carries a message but the sign is complete in itself and not related to a way of representing alphabetically the name signified by the sign.
- (2) The message concept-The child understands that messages can be written down but there is no correspondence between what is written and what the message is claimed to be.
- (3) The copying principle - Children imitate or copy letters or words to establish the first units of printed behaviour.
- (4) The recurring principle - Repeating an action helps in establishing quick, habitual response patterns and helps a child to realise that the same element can recur in variable patterns.
- (5) Directional principles- These relate to the understandings related to 'writing' left to right and moving down the page. Clay claims that 'until some control has been gained over the directional principles the flexibility principle will be evident in the variety of approaches to print that children can devise.
- (6) Reversing the directional pattern - The child produces mirror writing.
- (7) The flexibility principle - Children experiment in creating new symbols by repositioning or decorating the standard forms.
- (8) The inventory principle -children appear to take stock of their own learning by listing or ordering aspects of their literacy knowledge.
- (9) The generating principle-The child extends performance by knowing some elements and some rules for combining them to produce new statements in an inventive way.
- (10) The contrastive principle-Children create contrasts between shapes, meanings, sounds and word patterns.
- (11) The child uses a space, or presumably some other symbol, to segment writing.
- (12) Page and book arrangement - The child, in addition to understanding the directional principle, can operate with larger areas of text.
- (13) The abbreviation principle - A child intentionally uses an abbreviation.

Clay's (1975) work, along with that of others, suggests very strongly that most children are, by the age of five, demonstrating through their writing that they have observed and understood a wide range of features of print production (p.50). Observation of these behaviours on the part of young children provides a basis for identification of emergent writing. Loughlin & Martin (1987) believe that the teacher must use the learning environment itself to find evidence of literacy growth. They conclude that there are two direct pieces of evidence to be examined: the products of children's activities and the children's literacy practices throughout the day (p.169).

To that end they have provided checklists which can be used in analyzing both the quality of the environment and the children's growth within it (Loughlin & Martin, 1987).

Observation of students' punctuation errors may teach teacher that they may be viewed as sensible (Kolin, 2022) This is because their use of punctuation often reproduces patterns found in spoken language, a fact which suggests that these writers are at least adept at using commas and periods to capture the intonation and pauses of speech (p. 24) This erroneous punctuation may in fact lead to greater readability. The implications for teachers are that they concentrate on pointing out the differences between the requirements of writing and speaking.

Toms River, (2020) believes that criteria outlines can be applied to a range of writing modes and across a fairly wide age/stage range, with modifications made where appropriate. It is noted that, Given the relatively short time available for writing in schools, it would be helpful if descriptive summaries and cumulative records were kept of students' writing development over primary and secondary years, and across all subjects. Students own perception of their development could be part of such records (p.16).

Peoples (2020) points out that hyperfluency may be a stage which students pass through in their wish to be sophisticated and part of the world of their would-be peers. Although it is looked upon with disfavour and may be ridiculed, hyperfluency can signal the growth of some students' linguistic resources. As such, the language teacher should honour the students' desire to enter the academic discourse community.... and bring such students to a deeper awareness of language difference to equip them for the many transitions they will make in life. Teachers' comments can take students' attention away from their own purposes in writing a particular text and focus that attention on the teachers' purpose in commenting (Toms River, 2020), thus denying the students' own voice. In so doing, students may well make changes to please the teacher rather giving attention to those the student believes necessary.

Toms River's research suggests that teachers' commenting is generally not as good as it should be because teachers were rarely trained to do this in a way that motivates revision and, because teachers are taught to read and interpret only, they read students' writing with biases about what should have been written and in the expectation that errors must and will be found. With the emphasis on errors, the students' meaning can be lost to the teacher (Ngono, 2012).

CONCLUSION

This paper has examined how competency-based approach and writing skills development in cameroon secondary schools child education has endured recurring curriculum transformation. Major modifications have occurred in the area of language and literacy. Practitioners are cognizant of these changes. They must improve the knowledge and skills required to sustain an education program that focuses and addresses the young children's needs in present society particularly in writing and reading. This study has revealed the learning as a concept has been reviewed from a variety of positions according to theorists. For this reason, we have witnessing fluctuations in the research carried out in the field of didactics of French as a foreign language. Indeed, learning a language involves learning the different skills in writing that language. Among these skills; the skill of written production, which for a long time seems like a labyrinth given the complexity of establishing effective learning in writing.

The paper has proven the effectiveness through the methods and techniques proposed to teaching /learning to write well and to acquire, thereafter subsequently acquire a competence in written production. learning was defined in relation to the notion of acquisition, then we exposed the different theories of learning, constructivism, cognitivism, they were also related to the new concepts of self-learning, motivation and competence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We all aimed at addressing the needs of students learning to write. As has been pointed out many times, there is no quick fix that will close the gaps in students' learning of written French at the secondary levels. However, there are a number of actions that can be taken quickly to improve the acquisition of language writing proficiency:

- Text types, grammar and vocabulary should be reviewed by helping students make a memo and whether it focuses on the grammatical structures. Ask the students use them in their future writing production.
- Teachers should ask students to follow the rules of essay writing the question asked and is written with the required length of words
- In writing, students should have the ability to present facts and express their thoughts that to describe facts and events accurately
- Students should master vocabulary accuracy: basic vocabulary is well used even though it's still a bit hard to express more complex ideas.
- Grammar based spelling should be encouraged singular and plural forms

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