



Research Study

Towards the introduction of the teaching of technical English in Technical education in Cameroon: Pre-requisites and Prospects

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ABSTRACT. This study is a follow-up of three previous ones by the same authors. The first one culminated in a language-in-education policy article in 2018. The second study (2022) revisits student, parent and teacher attitudes to, and practices of, English Language teaching and learning in Cameroon Technical Education. It strongly recommends the development of English Language teachers' capacities in technical education (TE) to teach ESP. The third led to a paper focussing on the achievements, constraints and perspectives of the teaching of English in TE (in press), underscoring the necessity of introducing English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in TE. The present work, which draws from interviews with pedagogic inspectors and the analysis of key relevant documents, proposes steps towards an effective introduction of ESP in TE by outlining general guiding principles for key areas, such as syllabus content, teacher training, integration of competence-based approaches, and didactic material. The study takes into consideration the current education orientation law, existing TE curricula, and prevailing teacher training policy and programmes which include the socio-economic context of Cameroon. The authors understand that each of the aspects addressed should generate more detailed studies.

RÉSUMÉ. Cette étude fait suite à trois précédentes réalisées par les mêmes auteurs. La première a abouti à un article sur la politique linguistique en éducation en 2018. La seconde étude (2022) réexamine les attitudes et les pratiques des élèves, parents et enseignants quant à l'enseignement /l'apprentissage de l'anglais dans l'enseignement technique (ET) au Cameroun, recommandant fortement le renforcement des capacités des enseignants d'anglais à enseigner l'AdS. La troisième, portant sur les réalisations, les contraintes et les perspectives de l'enseignement de l'anglais dans l'ET (sous presse), souligne la nécessité d'introduire l'anglais de spécialité (AdS) dans l'ET. Le présent travail, s'appuyant sur des entretiens avec des inspecteurs de pédagogie et l'analyse de documents clés, propose des mesures pour une introduction efficace de l'AdS dans l'ET. Elle propose des principes directeurs généraux pour les programmes, la formation des enseignants, l'intégration de l'approche par compétences et le matériel didactique. L'étude considère la loi actuelle sur l'orientation de l'éducation, les programmes de l'ET, la politique et les programmes de formation des enseignants, y compris le contexte socio-économique du Cameroun, chacun des aspects abordés devant conduire à des études plus détaillées.

Keywords: *English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Syllabuses, Teacher training, Technical education, Didactic material.*



INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

One of the major traits of the uniqueness of Cameroon is its sociolinguistic profile: there are around 280 languages, two European-inherited official languages (OLs), and a widespread Pidgin English with a population roughly estimated at 25 million. The two OLs (English and French) were adopted at independence in the 1961 Constitution of the young federal state¹ in view of promoting national unity and national integration, given that, with her linguistic landscape, Cameroon was a real epitome of the Tower of Babel (Tadadjeu, 1990). The status of OLs granted to English and French automatically made them very powerful tools any citizen needed to possess to ensure their social and professional growth. In fact, both OLs were languages of education, of the administration, of mass media, the court, etc. Thus, mastering them was a *sine qua non* for citizens. Having adopted such a language policy, the government had to plan and support the acquisition/learning of both OLs by citizens. Among the measures/strategies designed by state rulers, the teaching of OLs in the education system of the country was prioritised so as to produce English-French bilingual citizens able to live and work anywhere in the country. However, most researchers have deemed the state's attempts to promote English-French bilingualism (better known as official bilingualism (OB)) as a failure, for the more pessimistic, or as having mitigated results (Echu, 1999; Fassé, 2012; Kouega, 1999; Mpoche, 2012), for the less pessimistic. The orientation of the promotion of OB in education is worth describing in order to underscore the relevance of the present paper, the aim of which is to provide the rationale and sketch the way through which ESP can be introduced in Cameroon's TE.

To understand the promotion of OB in education in Cameroon requires a consideration of the country's education system itself. Cameroon has a dual education system made up of two subsystems of education, the Anglophone subsystem of education (ASE) and the Francophone subsystem of education (FSE). The ASE is derived from the British system of education, while the FSE is a replica of the French education system. To promote OB in these two subsystems, Cameroon instituted compulsory second official language (SOL) classes, i.e., the teaching of English as SOL in FSE and the teaching of French as SOL in ASE (see Takam & Fasse (2018) for an extensive discussion). It is noteworthy that each subsystem of Cameroon's education system (CES) comprises two main post-primary education orientations: general education (GE) and technical education (TE). GE lasts seven years after primary education and provides generic knowledge in subjects like maths, history, geography, physics, citizenship, chemistry, biology, languages, and literature. However, the choice of majors and minors differs between the ASE and the FSE. TE may last seven years, if started immediately after primary education, or three

¹ In fact, Cameroon is the postcolonial union of a former British territory (close to 20% of the population and overall surface area) and a former French colony (80% of the population and territory). In the British territory ruled by British colonial masters, English was the official language (OL), while French was the OL in the French territory under the civilising mission of France.



years, if started after secondary education. It offers possibilities of learning a specific trade, which could be in the field of technology, engineering, business, and healthcare.

After half a century of practice of SOL promotion through education, the results are still unsatisfactory, the more so in TE which faces specific preconceived and well-rooted ideas: that technicians do not need to master languages, but only technical skills. The related motto goes: "A technician is seen, not heard". For example, a good carpenter is not judged upon how much English or French they write or speak, but on how good the furniture or roof they produce is. This negative idea, coupled with another popular saying among Francophone Cameroonians which hints that "English comes from Heaven", meaning that it is not the amount of effort put in that gets one to master English, but rather an endowment from God that one is born with, has, among other factors, caused the neglect of language learning by students in TE. Besides, TE is supposed to equip learners with professional skills for them to be operational upon graduating from high school. Given the added advantage of being English-French bilingual in the Cameroonian job market, TE students would gain a lot through appropriate English as a second official language (ESOL) training. For instance, a student who leaves TE with a baccalaureate in their specialty already possesses enough professional skills to join the job market. Their good knowledge of English would allow them to work in companies where English is the language of communication as well as in companies where everything is done in French. Ultimately, Takam & Fasse (forthcoming)'s work in which ESOL training in TE is amply assessed by key stakeholders who are national and regional pedagogic inspectors points out some salient elements which have prompted the current paper. The first is that ESOL training in TE is visibly not taken as seriously as it is in GE. Students display lukewarm attitudes towards it (see Takam & Fasse, forthcoming). Secondly, though TE is very different in terms of curricula and overall education objectives from GE, there has been, so far, no major differentiation made between ESOL syllabuses for GE and those for TE, apart from very recent moves² towards developing specific syllabuses for TE. Indeed, ESP is the teaching and learning of English "for students to whom the syllabus, tasks, and methodology is especially tailored to their interests and needs" (Laborda, 2011, p. 102), whether they be academic or occupational. Unlike ESL, which is the teaching and learning of general English, the focus of ESP is on "pragmatic, experience-based instruction [...] aimed at preparing learners for real-world demands" (Martin, 2010, p. 24). Thirdly and predictably, ESOL teachers for TE who are trained in the same teacher training school with the same syllabus as ESOL teachers for GE are not didactically equipped to handle ESP classes appropriately. For example, to teach ESP to mechanical engineering students requires some understanding of mechanical engineering facts and phenomena, including some grasping of basic related jargon by the teacher besides their mastery of pedagogic approaches and methods. The current study aims to propose ways through which ESP could be efficiently introduced in TE. To this end, we move on with an overview of Cameroon's TE as it stands today

² The Ministry of Secondary Education has released new syllabuses of English in Technical education with the introduction of the competency-based approach in TE.



in terms of specialisations and ESOL training. Then comes a discussion of syllabus issues followed by a discussion of ESP teacher training issues; pedagogical and didactic issues are discussed thereafter. The paper closes with aspects of teachers' and students' motivations. But before moving further, it is good at this juncture to outline the method used in this study.

METHOD

The data for this study stem from two main sources: first, the interviews of national as well as regional pedagogic inspectors for the promotion of official bilingualism in secondary education; second, the study of key regulatory documents such as current ESOL syllabuses for TE, some ministerial decisions, and official booklists. Inspectors were interviewed in three regions, the Centre for two national inspectors, the Littoral Region (one regional pedagogic inspector), and the West Region (three regional pedagogic inspectors). These key actors in the implementation of the government's language-in-education policy each had between 7 and 15 years of experience as pedagogic inspectors and thus could authoritatively inform the research team on the issues discussed. The key regulatory documents mentioned above were mainly used as a means of triangulation. This allowed us to examine multiple sources of evidence in order to reduce the impact of potential biases that could arise from having information provided only by the pedagogic inspectors (see Bowen (2009) on the analysis of official document information). These document sources, as insinuated by Bowen (2009), also provided supplementary research data, information, and insights as valuable additions to the qualitative data obtained through the interviews, and provided background and context to information from national and regional pedagogic inspectors.

The data were analysed thematically around the following themes that emerged from the participants' responses and regulatory document sources: (1) important aspects in the language policy and planning of education in Cameroon as it relates to technical education; (2) the role of ESP in technical education; and (3) ESOL teacher training and professional development. Each of these aspects plays its own important part in forming the current and future state of ESOL in Cameroon's technical education.

KEY ASPECTS OF ESP

This section aims at reviewing the concept of ESP, looking at the definition and the various types as obtained in ELT literature, and then clearly outlining the ESP features this work considers. ESP, whose origin is traced as far back as the 1960s (Anthony, 1997), has been defined in many ways in the literature. In this work, two definitions will be discussed. They are considered as two ends of a continuum along which other definitions could be placed. At one end, we have the definition of Hutchinson & Walters (1987, p. 19), who state that "ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning." To this very broad definition, this study opposes that of Dudley-Evan (1997), itself a modified version of Stevens (1988)'s definition. According to Dudley-Evan, quoted by Anthony (1997, p. 2), ESP has two distinct characteristics: absolute and variable ones:



Absolute Characteristics

1. ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learners.
2. ESP makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves.
3. ESP is centred on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre.

Variable Characteristics

1. ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines.
2. ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English.
3. ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. **It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level.**
4. ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students.
5. **Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems** (our emphasis).

Both absolute as well as variable characteristics, as defined by Dudley-Evan, constitute the rationale for the introduction of ESP in Cameroon's TE. Elements emphasised in the citation are particularly linked to the situation of ESOL in Cameroon's TE, as will be discussed later. Apart from the definition of ESP, it should be underscored that, over the years, different types of ESP have been developed and are worth reviewing.

The typology of ESP will be considered from two perspectives: that of Carver (1983) and that highlighted by Bojović (2006). According to Carver (1983), referred to by Al-Humaidi (2007, p. 7), three types of ESP exist, namely "English as a Restricted Language, English for Academic and Occupational Purposes (EAOP), and English with Specific Topics". Under English as a restricted language, the case of the English used by air traffic professionals is cited. This type of English is useful only and solely within the specific area of air traffic. This type can also be referred to as "English for special purposes." EAOP, on its part, comprises, as its name suggests, two components: EAP (English for Occupational Purposes) and EAP (English for Academic Purposes). Regarding English with specific topics,

It differs from other types of ESP in the sense that focus shifts from purpose to topic. That is, the focus is on topics that are in agreement with the anticipated future English needs of learners such as scientists requiring English for postgraduate reading studies, attending conferences or working in foreign institutions. It has been argued, however, that this type should not be viewed as a separate type of ESP but rather an integral component of ESP courses or programs with focus on situational language. (Al-Humaidi, 2007, p. 7)



Another three-element typology is that of Hutchinson & Waters (1987). According to these authors, ESP should be divided into "English for Science and Technology (EST), English for Business and Economics (EBE), and English for Social Studies (ESS)" (Al-Humaidi (2007, p. 7). In this line, ESP in TE will encompass EST and EBE, considering the two main branches of TE in Cameroon: industrial and commercial branches. Another typology worth discussing is that outlined by Bojović (2006) in the following words:

Another division of ESP divides EAP and EOP according to discipline or professional area in the following way: 1) EAP involves English for (Academic) Science and Technology (EST), English for (Academic) Medical Purposes (EMP), English for (Academic) Legal Purposes (ELP), and English for Management, Finance and Economics; 2) EOP includes English for Professional Purposes (English for Medical Purposes, English for Business Purposes – EBP) and English for Vocational Purposes (Pre-vocational English and Vocational English); in EAP, EST has been the main area, but EMP and ELP have always had their place. (p. 488)

As per this typology, the type of ESP to promote in Cameroon technical education (CTE) remains EOP, more specifically, English for professional purposes and English for vocational purposes. However, it should be highlighted that there is no water-tight frontier between the two types of ESP. The different typologies should not overshadow the fact that ESP should be seen as merely

the teaching and learning of English as a second or foreign language where the goal of the learners is to use English in a particular domain. [...] A key feature of an ESP course is that the content and aims of the course are oriented to the specific needs of the learners. ESP courses, then, focus on the language, skills, and genres appropriate to the specific activities the learners need to carry out in English. (Paltridge & Starfield, 2013, p. 2)

In this line, we would say that ESP in CTE will have to do with the teaching and learning of the type of English in which graduates from CTE will need to be functional in their respective trades once they join professional settings. It is the purpose of this paper to propose a way to introduce this type of ESOL classes in CTE. However, a glance at the technical education sector, and most especially at ESOL training therein, is very important.

A REVIEW OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN CAMEROON AND ESOL TRAINING

This section will briefly present the organisation of technical education in Cameroon, highlighting its structuring and its specialisations. The section will close with key features of ESOL classes in TE in Cameroon. But before describing the programme structure of CTE, it appears necessary to underscore its objectives, which are clearly stated by Che (2007) as follows: "The goals of technical educational settings in Cameroon include providing a trained workforce for various employment sectors, to increase understanding of technology, and to prepare people who might be able to solve the environmental problems Cameroon is facing" (Che, 2007, p. 334).



Employment is thus central in the objectives of CTE; and being able to operate professionally in the two OLS of Cameroon is undoubtedly a very big advantage. A successful introduction of ESP will therefore contribute tremendously in empowering CTE graduates for the job market.

CTE is organised into two cycles: the first, which lasts four years, takes place in government technical junior high schools (first cycle of secondary education) and is sanctioned by an end-of-cycle national examination known mostly by its French acronym *CAP (Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle)*, i.e., a certificate of professional competence. The second cycle³ is run in government technical high schools where tuition lasts three years and culminates in a baccalaureate of technical education certificate, in FSE, and a GCE 'A' level, technical, in ASE. It should be mentioned that there exists a pre-baccalaureate (*Probatoire*) examination taking place in the second year of high school. TE is divided into two main branches: the commercial branch (now referred to as sciences and technologies of the tertiary sector) and the industrial branch, each offering several specialities as detailed below. However, given that ESP, as seen above, is taken only after a certain degree of General English, we suppose that after four years of general English in the first cycle, added to the foundation laid in primary education, second cycle learners will be ready for ESP courses. It is noteworthy that the current syllabuses for ESOL in TE, released in 2014, already call for specialisation awareness among teachers. In fact, syllabus designers draw the attention of teachers of ESOL in TE to the necessity for them to be "speciality-specific" in the following terms:

Teachers should endeavour to use vocabulary/lexis and register that is speciality-specific in the fields of Carpentry, Bricklaying, Mechanics, Electricity, Electronics, Refrigeration, Welding, Commerce, Dressmaking/Seamstering, Plumbing, Surveying, High-Tech, Information Technology, General Engineering, etc. (MINESEC, 2014, p. 10)

The foregoing quotation means that the seed of ESP is planted in the first cycle of CTE and needs merely to be taken care of properly in the second cycle. A scrutiny of the new syllabuses for the second cycle of TE shows that the same expectation levied upon teachers of the first cycle appears, with the exact same wordings. Teachers equally have to battle to know some speciality-specific vocabulary to inject into their teachings, just as if ESP was only a matter of vocabulary. The centrality of vocabulary in ESP cannot be ignored; however, a good ESP teacher should know what trade-specific activities are performed on a daily basis so as to choose corresponding didactic materials. Considering that it is in the second cycle that ESP is expected to be intensified as suggested by this study, the description of specialities of CTE will include only those of this second cycle. This second cycle forks into two major groupings of specialisations: The sciences

³ In the FSE, technical secondary education bifurcates into two cycles. The first cycle is made up of four levels/classes (Première Année, Deuxième Année, Troisième Année and Quatrième Année) while the second cycle is composed of Seconde (2^{nde}), Première (1^{ère}) and Terminale (Tle). This classification goes from the first year in secondary school (Première Année) to the final year of Secondary school (Terminale).



and technologies of the tertiary sector (STT) and the industrial sector. Under the STT grouping are 12 specialities detailed as in the table below.

2^{nde} Management	1 ^{ère} FIG Taxation and Business Computing	Tle FIG Taxation and Business Computing
	1 ^{ère} ACA Administrative Action and Communication	Tle ACA Administrative Action and Communication
	1 ^{ère} CG Accounting and Management	Tle CG Accounting and Management
	1 ^{ère} ACC Business Action and Communication	Tle ACC Business Action and Communication
2^{nde} SES Social and Economic Science	1 ^{ère} SES Social and Economic Science	Tle SES Social and Economic Science
2^{nde} HO-RE Hotel Management and Catering	1 ^{ère} CU Cooking	Tle CU Cooking
	1 ^{ère} RB Restaurant-Bar	Tle RB Restaurant-Bar
	1 ^{ère} HE Accommodation	Tle HE Accommodation
2^{nde} TO Tourism	1 ^{ère} AV Traveling Agent	Tle AV Traveling Agent
	1 ^{ère} AAT Hospitality and Tourist Entertainment	Tle AAT Hospitality and Tourist Entertainment
2^{nde} ESF Home and Social Economics	1 ^{ère} ESF Home and Social Economics	Tle ESF Home and Social Economics
2^{nde} B-PA Baking and Pastry	1 ^{ère} B-PA Baking and Pastry	Tle B-PA Baking and Pastry

Table 1. Specialities of the sciences and technologies of the tertiary sector in CTE

We have maintained the French acronyms as they are the official terms. The availability of the 12 specialisations is not systematic in all technical high schools across the nation. The same holds for the second grouping of specialisations, i.e., the industrial sector with its 22 specialities as displayed in the figure below.

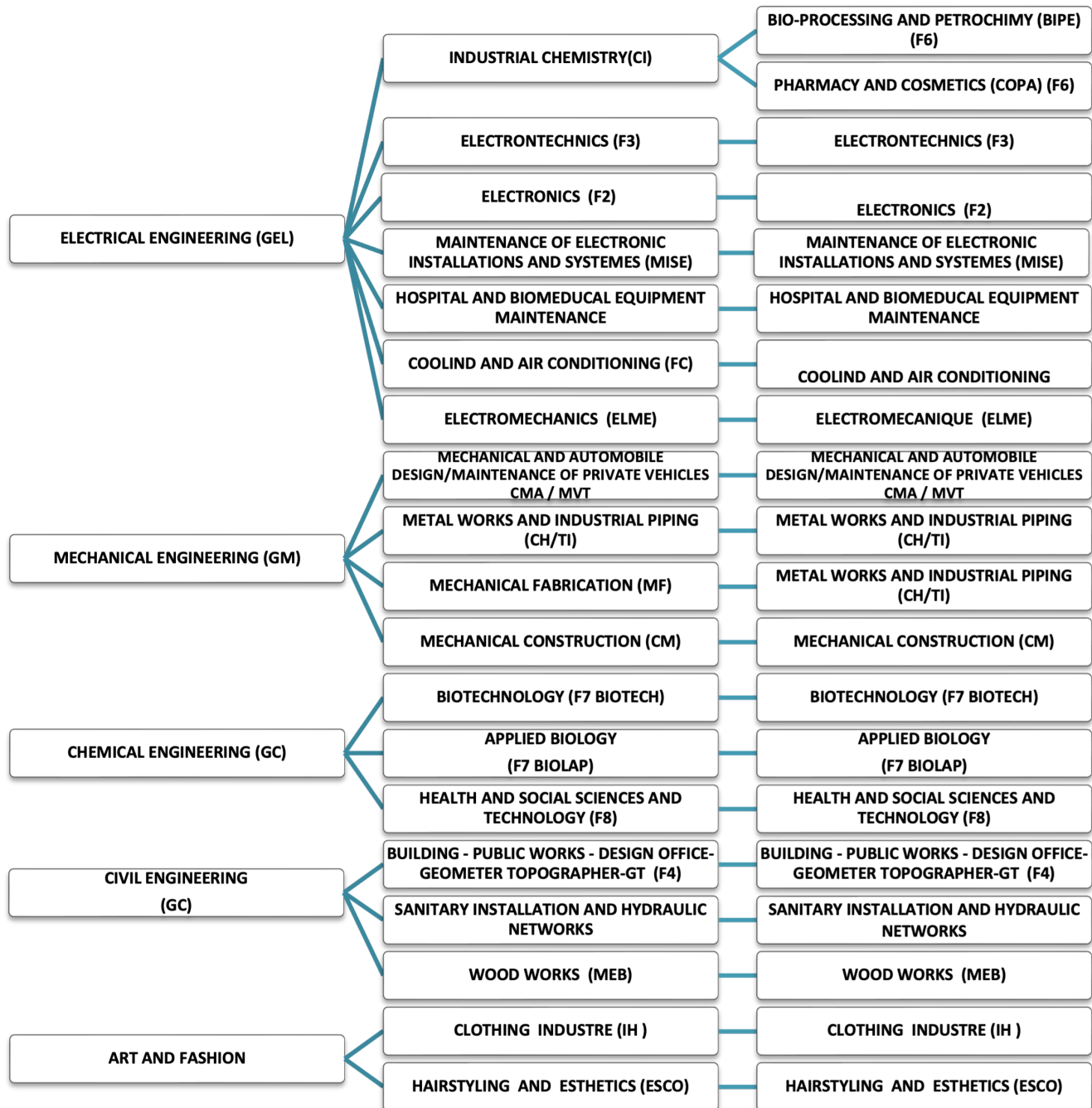


Figure 1: Specialities of the second cycle in Cameroon Technical Education



The industrial sector, with its arena of specialisations, shows that CTE is very comprehensive and is capable of yielding the skilled workforce able to back up the secondary and tertiary sectors of the country's economy. Given that some major infrastructural and industrial projects are run by foreign investors who bring along their most immediate collaborators, people whose working language would in most cases be English, providing fundamental ESP training in CTE is therefore necessary. The key issue now appears to be that of ensuring that students in each of the more than 30 specialisations listed in the two preceding tables learn the English of their trade. This makes syllabus design one of the key challenges to overcome for the introduction of ESP in CTE. Designers of current syllabuses, confronted with the challenge, preferred to restrict ESP to the mere introduction of specialty-specific vocabulary as previously underscored. The present study proposes a different approach to syllabus design for ESP in CTE.

ESP SYLLABUSES

This section provides major orientations for the design of ESP syllabuses for CTE. It opens with the definition of syllabuses, reviews the current ones, and then provides general guidelines for the elaboration of proper ESP syllabuses.

Concerning the definition of syllabus, we will consider two in this study. The first is that which is provided by the *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* outlined by Richards & Schmidt (2010), that is:

a description of the contents of a course of instruction and the order in which they are to be taught. Language-teaching syllabuses may be based on different criteria such as (a) grammatical items and vocabulary (see *structural syllabus*) (b) the language needed for different types of situations (see *situational method*) (c) the meanings and communicative functions which the learner needs to express in the target language (see *notional syllabus*) (d) the skills underlying different language behaviour or (e) the text types learners need to master. (Richards et al., 2010, p. 576)

The second definition, equally detailed, can be read on the questions and answers page of the Stanford University website dedicated to syllabi:

A syllabus is your guide to a course and what will be expected of you in the course. Generally, it will include course policies, rules and regulations, required texts, and a schedule of assignments. A syllabus can tell you nearly everything you need to know about how a course will be run and what will be expected of you (Stanford University, 2020).

If the first definition is restricted to course content and sequencing only, the second one includes pedagogic, didactic and regulatory orientations. However, an even more comprehensive description of what syllabuses are and should do lies in the list of their purposes as provided by Hutchinson & Waters (1987) quoted by Murphy (2018), that is:



- to break language down into manageable units and provide a practical basis for textbooks and instructional blocks
- to thus provide teachers and learners with moral support
- to reassure students and/or sponsors that a course has been well planned: its cosmetic role
- to give both students and teachers an idea of where the course is going
- to act as an implicit statement of the views held by the course designers regarding language and language learning—telling students not only what they are to learn but why
- to guide the selection of materials, texts and exercises
- to ensure an element of uniformity across a school or educational system
- to assess how successful a student has been during a course by providing a basis for testing. (Murphy, p. 2)

This outline of the purpose of syllabuses will be the bedrock of the elaboration of ESP syllabuses for CTE, given the novelty of ESP in the whole ELT business in Cameroon. Their elaboration should equally take into consideration that the pedagogic approach in force in Cameroon since 2013 is the competency-based approach (CBA), even though its implementation is still facing several obstacles. Regarding hurdles to a smooth implementation of CBA in ELT in Cameroon, Belibi (2018) lists the following major ones:

deficiencies in teacher education and the PD (personal development) of English teachers, inadequate education infrastructure and teaching materials, a different school culture, the weak implication of school leadership in the reform, the non-integration of technology and the rejection of French in the EFL class. (p. 122)

It is clear from the hurdles above that the paradigm shift in pedagogic approach still has a long way to reach the success expected. However, the CBA remains the most suitable approach to use in CTE given that TE is first and foremost skill-oriented. The fact that Belibi (2018, p. 111) lists “deficiencies in teacher education” as the first hurdle explains why there will be a focus on teacher training in this paper.

At this juncture, some general guidelines are provided on how ESP syllabuses will be built, bearing in mind that we will be dealing with a “low-resource context” (Belibi, 2018, p. 100). Given that ESP is domain-specific, one would normally expect to have as many syllabuses as there are specialisations in CTE. This would in turn entail as many textbooks. What this study proposes is the grouping of specialisations following the *Seconde* classes curriculum as seen in Table 1 and Chart 1 above. Each syllabus could cover the whole second cycle and ideally only one textbook will be written to accompany teaching activities over the three years of the second cycle. Given that we *are* in a low-resource context, coupled with a phobia of languages among TE students, it would be a motivating factor for them to know that they will buy only one textbook for the whole second cycle. The following table shows the proposed distribution of syllabuses across disciplines of CTE.



No Syllabuses	Group of disciplines	Remarks
STT specialities		
1	Management	
	Social and Economic Science	
2	Hotel Management and Catering	Baking and pastry has been added here because of its affinity with cooking and catering
	Baking and pastry	
3	Tourism	
4	Home and social economics	
Industrial specialities		
1	Electrical Engineering	
2	Mechanical Engineering	
3	Chemical Engineering	
4	Art and Fashion	

Table 2: Proposed distribution of syllabuses across disciplines in CTE

As per the distribution above, a total of eight syllabuses could be written. It is desirable that each syllabus correspond to a coursebook for the three levels and a workbook per level.

Moreover, to stick with the CBA, parts of lessons or whole lessons should take place in workshops, with as many realia as possible to make the training lively and relevant to learners' everyday life. In other words, the experiential learning principle, which puts experience in the heart of any successful learning experience (Kulb, 1984, p. 38), should guide the delivery of effective ESP classes in TE. It is thus presumed that when learners will practise using English to perform activities connected to their specialisation, they will learn easily, and even enjoy their lessons more. The fact that the CBA favours lesson content that is connected to learners' lives warrants that textbook writers propose content related not only to the current environment of learners, but also to their future professional realities. Therefore, authors of such textbooks should be well acquainted with the local culture, but also remain open to global issues. Carver (1983), referred to by Bojović (2006), lists three major features of ESP courses which, according to us, should guide syllabus design and course delivery. They include the use of authentic material, purpose-related orientation and self-direction. The first feature relates to the use of realia, as underscored above; the second to the "simulation of communicative tasks," which requires proposing activities to learners that get them to use the language; the third one has to do with "turning learners into users" so as to get them to showcase the language competences developed (Bojović, 2006, pp. 489-490). These three features make unusual demands on the ESP teachers, who for this reason are called, rather, ESP "practitioners" by Dudley-Evans & St John (1998), as cited in Bojović (2006, p. 490). If the implementation of CBA is already difficult for ELT teachers in Cameroon in general, as underscored by Belibi (2018), what more would it



be if they had to handle ESP in CTE? This is why, among the conditions necessary for a smooth introduction of ESP in CTE, appropriate teacher training is paramount.

TEACHER TRAINING FOR ESP IN CAMEROON TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Before proposing a roadmap for the training of ESP practitioners (this term is used here interchangeably with “teacher”), it would be good to review the current situation of ESOL teachers in CTE. Takam & Fasse (2018) indicate that ESOL teachers in CTE are trained at the higher teacher training college (ENS) in Yaounde, with no differentiation whatsoever between those who will teach ESOL in TE and those who will do so in GE. These teachers are all language and/or literature specialists. They hold no or very little technological or technical know-how. The result is that very little ESP is taught in CTE, although the designers of the current syllabuses of ESOL in TE expect teachers to include ESP elements in their teachings. This is why the study proposes, in line with pedagogic inspectors, that ESP practitioners be trained differently. The difference will lie at three levels: the profile of trainees, the training programmes and the training institutions.

Concerning the profile, we propose two: one of which is that of graduates from technical and/or technological education, and the other, holders of degrees in language and or literature. The first group may spend only one year in teacher training. They already master the trade, but simply need training in ELT techniques and approaches. They will therefore mainly receive “science of education” courses. The second group will need at least two years of training with one year devoted to the learning of “matter” (technology, engineering and business subjects knowledge) and the second to that of “manner” (teaching approaches and techniques). Each group will be subdivided into subgroups, one for secondary sector ESP teachers (SSESPT), i.e., those that will teach STT-speciality students, while the second subgroup will be those trained to teach industrial-speciality students (ISESPT). For future teachers to receive proper training on the “matter,” we believe that, in the context of Cameroon, Advanced Teacher Training Colleges for Technical Education (ENSET) are more appropriate. There are four such institutions in the country: two in Anglophone Cameroon (Bambili and Kumba) and two in Francophone Cameroon (Douala, the oldest, and Ebolowa, the newest). These teacher training institutions are ideal, because they do not just develop teaching skills, but equally provide trainees with technical, technological and engineering know-how in all the specialties of CTE. In building training programmes for ESP teachers, we strongly recommend the consideration of the roles of ESP practitioners, including guidelines on their training as proposed by Bojović (2006).

In fact, concerning the roles of the ESP practitioner, Bojović lists five main ones: “teacher”, “course designer and material provider”, “researcher”, “collaborator” and “evaluator”. On the role of the practitioner as teacher, the same author relates this to knowledge transmission, but warns that in the case of ESP, learners may have a better mastery of the know-how of the speciality than the teacher. The latter should thus draw from their learners to better conduct their assignment. Indeed, a literature degree holder even after two years at a teacher training school will hardly master civil engineering issues as well as students who have spent a minimum



of five years studying it. As “course designer and material provider”, the practitioner should be skilful enough to adapt their teaching content to their context, and to be able to design new material when need be. This second role is directly linked to the third: “researcher”. In fact, to find new teaching techniques and new tasks, and to design new material, calls for permanent research. In this line, the practitioner must collaborate with colleagues to draw from their experience and findings, just as they must be ready to share theirs with others. And finally, as “evaluator”, the practitioner must be able to design various test tasks to include the four skills. Therefore, teacher training programme contents should equip ESP trainers in CTE to fulfil those five roles efficiently. A whole department for language training should therefore be open in each of the four higher teacher training colleges nationwide to tackle this task.

CONCLUSION

As demonstrated above, the role of ESP should be central in the teaching and learning of ESOL in technical education in Cameroon. Although the Ministry of Secondary Education of Cameroon (MINESEC) has set forth very promising syllabuses in 2018, 2019 and 2020 which pave the way for the development of ESP in Cameroon technical education, they will need to monitor several aspects carefully in order to ensure that they do achieve the desired goals: i.e., making sure that the English taught to technical education students is able to get them to deliver the service or job related to their speciality in English acceptably well. The quality of the syllabuses to be designed will play an important role in this process, as will an increased awareness of other possible hindrances within and around the school. By successfully promoting the importance of ESOL in English classes, by ensuring that ESOL teachers have the support and training that they need to succeed in technical education, and by better integrating differentiated instruction into ESOL teachings, such as through the inclusion of ESP in technical education, the goals of the new syllabuses will become much more attainable. It might be interesting, in future studies, to take a close look at student, parent and teacher attitudes and at and motivation for, and practices of, ESOL, in specific schools in the French system of education in Cameroon. Another gap which could be filled in the future could be the examination of how the suggested policy can be translated into daily practice in school environments.

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