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More than a Decade of Chinese Language Teaching in Secondary Education in Cameroon: Past, Present and Future

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Abstract

This study evaluates the decade-long evolution of Chinese language teaching and learning in Cameroon's secondary education system, from 2012 to 2025. Despite rapid growth, several challenges have emerged, including inadequate teacher training programmes, uneven distribution of teachers, and irrational teaching objectives. The research, based on document analyses, interviews, observations, and self-experience, identifies key problems and proposes solutions. The findings reveal a rapid increase in schools, teachers, and students, but also highlight issues such as an inappropriate Chinese language syllabus, insufficient teaching periods, and inadequate lecturers at the Higher Teacher Training College (HTTC). The study recommends optimising human resources, introducing Chinese language to technical education, and rationalising teaching time and objectives. It also proposes improving the teacher training curriculum at HTTC and strengthening in-service training programmes for teachers.

Keywords

Chinese language teaching, secondary education, Cameroon, teacher training, curriculum, language policy

Résumé

Cette étude évalue l'évolution de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage du chinois dans l'enseignement secondaire au Cameroun sur la période 2012–2025. Malgré une croissance ra-

pide, plusieurs défis ont émergé, notamment l'insuffisance des programmes de formation des enseignants, la répartition inégale du personnel enseignant et l'irrationalité de certains objectifs pédagogiques. La recherche, fondée sur l'analyse de documents, des entretiens, des observations et l'expérience professionnelle de l'auteur, identifie les principaux problèmes et propose des pistes de solutions. Les résultats révèlent une augmentation significative du nombre d'établissements, d'enseignants et d'apprenants, tout en mettant en évidence des difficultés liées à l'inadéquation du curriculum de chinois, à l'insuffisance des volumes horaires et au manque d'enseignants-formateurs à l'École Normale Supérieure (ENS). L'étude recommande l'optimisation des ressources humaines, l'introduction du chinois dans l'enseignement technique, ainsi que la rationalisation du temps d'enseignement et des objectifs pédagogiques. Elle préconise également l'amélioration du curriculum de formation des enseignants à l'ENS et le renforcement des programmes de formation continue.

Mots-clés

enseignement du chinois, enseignement secondaire, Cameroun, formation des enseignants, curriculum, politique linguistique

Introduction

Language education plays a vital role in shaping global citizenship and international perspectives. Cameroon, with its diverse cultural and linguistic landscape, has been promoting foreign language education since independence (Nama, 2016, p. 57-58). Studies have shown that introducing foreign languages in secondary schools can enhance cultural exchange and international relations (Xu Yongliang, 2016, p. 12).

Despite progress, challenges persist in the development and implementation of Chinese language education in Cameroon's secondary schools, including inadequate teacher training programmes and uneven distribution of teachers, indicating a need for further research and evaluation (Fei, 2013, p. 365-380).

This study aims to evaluate the progress and challenges of Chinese language education in Cameroon's secondary schools over the past decade, identifying key issues and providing recommendations for improvement. By examining the experiences of Chinese language learners and teachers in Cameroon, the study seeks to contribute to what Nama (2018, p. 365-380) calls the growing body of research on Chinese language education in Africa.

The article is structured into five sections. The first section reviews relevant literature and outlines the methodology used in this study. The second section presents the initial situation of Chinese teaching in 2012, providing a baseline for evaluation. The third section examines the development of Chinese language teaching and learning in Cameroon from 2012 to 2025, highlighting key trends and achievements. The fourth section identifies problems related to Chinese language teaching and learning in secondary education in Cameroon, analyzing their causes and implications. The final section offers recommendations to stakeholders, including the Ministry of Secondary Education, the Chinese Centre for Language Education and Cooperation, National Pedagogic Inspectors, Regional Pedagogic Inspectors, and the Higher Teacher Training College, aimed at improving the quality and effectiveness of Chinese language education in Cameroon's secondary schools.

I. Literature Review and Methodology

The growing importance of Chinese language education in Cameroon necessitates a comprehensive understanding of its evolution, challenges, and opportunities. This section reviews existing literature on Chinese language education in Cameroon, focusing on research conducted at secondary schools. Additionally, it outlines the methodology employed in this study, including document analysis, interviews, observation and self-experience, to investigate the development and challenges of Chinese language education in Cameroon's secondary schools. By combining these approaches, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding

of the current state of Chinese language education in Cameroon and inform future developments.

I. 1. Literature Review

Cameroon and Egypt are at the forefront of research on Chinese language education in Africa, with a substantial body of work dedicated to this field (Nama, 2021, p. 209-219). In Cameroon, research has primarily focused on the promotion of Chinese language in universities. However, some studies have equally provided valuable insights into the teaching of Chinese in the Ministry of Secondary Education. These studies have shed light on the challenges and opportunities in Chinese language education, informing the development of effective teaching and learning strategies.

I. 1. 1. The Confucius Institute at the University of Yaoundé II and Comprehensive Research

Studies on the Confucius Institute at the University of Yaoundé II have provided a comprehensive understanding of Chinese language education in Cameroon. Xu Lihua's (2009, pp. 12–20) examination of the developmental status quo and trends of Chinese language promotion in Cameroon revealed a growing demand for Chinese language instruction, driven largely by the strengthening of Sino-Cameroon relations and the increasing economic importance of China in Africa. However, Xu also highlighted persistent challenges which hinder the sustainable growth of Chinese language programmes, such as inadequate resources, limited teaching infrastructure, and insufficiently trained local instructors. Similarly, Chen Lianxiang's (2013, pp. 45–50) investigation into the operations of the Confucius Institute identified uneven teacher qualifications, frequent turnover among Chinese instructors, and weak management mechanisms as major obstacles to consistency and quality in teaching. These institutional challenges, according to Chen, affect the continuity of pedagogical approaches and the overall learning experience of students. Furthermore, Xu Yongliang's (2016, pp. 23–30) analysis of the contradictions between intensified development efforts and limited talent support, as well as between optimised teaching methods and the shortage of locally contextualised didactic materials, underscored the need for a more nuanced and sustainable approach to Chinese language education in Cameroon.

Taken together, these studies reveal that while the Confucius Institute and related initiatives have played a central role in promoting Chinese language learning, the long-term success of such programmes in Cameroon depends on addressing both structural and contextual challenges ranging from resource limitations and teacher training to curriculum adaptation and strategic policy alignment.

I. 1. 2. Chinese Language Teachers in Secondary Schools

Fei (2013, pp. 33–40) examines the training model for German teachers in Cameroon and uses it as a case study to provide insights for training native Chinese language teachers in secondary schools in Cameroon. The study investigates the training needs and abilities of native Chinese language teachers, identifying areas for improvement and suggesting training programme adjustments to address specific problems like the lack of basic Chinese knowledge or professional skills.

Xu Yongliang (2016, pp. 40–47) examined the cross-cultural adjustment experiences of Chinese language teachers dispatched to Africa in general, and to Cameroon in particular. As a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and multilingual Chinese-importing country with a significant socio-economic and cultural gap compared to China, Cameroon presents unique adaptation challenges for these teachers. The author emphasised the importance of these findings as a valuable reference for the selection, training, management, and cross-cultural adjustment of future international Chinese language teachers.

Nama (2021) builds on this line of inquiry by situating the teaching of Chinese within the broader framework of Cameroon's strategic development goals in the 21st century. Drawing on the growing international status of the Chinese language, its expanding role in global organisations, international markets, scientific innovation, and diplomacy, Nama (2021) argues that the introduction of Chinese language teaching in Cameroonian secondary schools represents a significant asset for the nation's development objectives. The study further outlines the overall objectives of Chinese language instruction as defined in the national curriculum, along with the regional distribution of Chinese language teachers and students. Based on these pedagogical aims and the available human and material resources, he proposes practical strategies to improve their implementation, including the introduction of Chinese language programmes in technical schools and the regional deployment of teachers according to local specificities to optimise resource use.

I. 1. 3. Chinese Language Curriculum and Textbook Materials for Secondary Schools

Studies on Chinese language curriculum and textbook materials for secondary schools have highlighted the need for contextualisation and localisation. Feuba's (2016, p. 45-50) comparative analysis of two major Chinese language textbooks used in Cameroon, *New Practical Chinese Textbook (I)* and *Hello Cameroon*, revealed several pedagogical insights. The study found that teachers and students generally preferred a broader range of communicative questions reflecting local contexts, as well as the inclusion of more contextualised exercises to enhance learning and practice. It also recommended that cultural explanations incorporate richer, locally relevant content to facilitate intercultural understanding. Regarding *Hello*

Cameroon, the findings indicated that most teachers considered the selected topics relevant and practical, while both teachers and students appreciated the cultural section for effectively comparing Chinese and Cameroonian cultures.

Nama (2018, pp. 10–18) further observed that the rapid expansion of Chinese language teaching in Cameroonian secondary schools has, however, faced several challenges, particularly in relation to syllabus and textbook design. The author recommended a revision of the Chinese language syllabus based on three main criteria: alignment with the national foreign language teaching framework, coherence with the general international Chinese teaching syllabus, and adaptation to the unique characteristics of the Chinese language, especially its writing system. Regarding the textbook *Hello Cameroon*, Nama suggested strengthening coherence between its content and the national Chinese syllabus, reducing the excessive use of Chinese characters, including more grammar-based exercises, and adhering to the comparative pedagogical methods promoted by the Ministry of Secondary Education for the teaching of Chinese culture.

I. 2. Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate the evolution and challenges of Chinese language education in Cameroon's secondary schools. The research design consisted of three main components: document analysis, interviews, and observation and self-experience.

I . 2. 1. Document Analysis

A comprehensive review of official documents, research papers, and progress reports on Chinese language education in Cameroon's secondary schools was conducted. Documents analysed included:

- 10 papers on Chinese language education in Cameroonian secondary schools
- Official documents such as national education policies and guidelines
- 20 activity reports from the Regional Pedagogic Inspectors of Chinese of the Ministry of Secondary Education
- 7 Chinese language syllabi and curricula for the first and second cycles of Secondary Education
- 5 Chinese textbooks used in secondary schools

The document analysis provided basic information for the study, inspired research ideas, and helped to identify gaps in existing research.

I .2. 2. Interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders in Chinese language education, including:

- 3 Chinese teachers at the Higher Teacher Training College (HTTC)
- 10 national and regional pedagogic inspectors of Chinese language for secondary schools
- 1 secondary school Chinese language curriculum designer
- Authors of nationally approved Chinese language textbooks for secondary schools
- The current Director(2021-2025) of the Confucius Institute at the University of Yaoundé II
- 30 Cameroonian and Chinese teachers of Chinese language

The interviews aimed to systematically review the history of Chinese language education in Cameroon's secondary schools, summarise its current situation and problems, and propose countermeasures for these problems.

1.2.3. Observation and Self-Experience

The author's extensive experience as a teacher of Chinese in secondary schools, a former student of Chinese at the University of Maroua, a lecturer in Chinese at the University of Maroua and the University of Yaounde I, and a National Pedagogic Inspector of Chinese language at the Ministry of Secondary Education, was leveraged to collect and analyse the most recent information on Chinese language education in Cameroon. This experiential knowledge provided valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities in Chinese language education in Cameroon's secondary schools.

II. Situation of Chinese Teaching in 2012

This section examines the state of Chinese language teaching in Cameroon's secondary schools in 2012, a pivotal year in the development of Chinese language education in the country. It provides an overview of teacher training staff and students at the Higher Teacher Training College (HTTC-UMa), as well as the number of teachers, students, and secondary schools where Chinese was taught.

II. 1. Teacher Training Staff and Students in HTTC-UMa

The introduction of Chinese language in HTTC-UMa in 2008 marked a significant milestone in the development of Chinese language education in sub-Saharan Africa. By 2012, the teaching staff consisted of eight Chinese teachers, all of whom were Chinese nationals with diverse backgrounds. Staff members held varying academic degrees, including Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD degrees, in fields such as Teaching Chinese as a Second Language, Chinese Linguistics, and English (Nama, 2019). Notably, in 2012, the Chinese specialty at HTTC-UMa saw a record enrollment of 134 students (not counting the 14 trained student teachers), including 31 Level 3 students, 40 Level 2 students, and 63 Level 1 students.

Number of HTTC Students and Teachers in 2012

Category	Number
Cameroonian Teachers	0
Chinese Teachers	8
Students	134

II. 2. Teachers, Students, and Secondary Schools

In 2012, there were 11 Cameroonian secondary schools where Chinese was taught, among which were 9 public and 2 private schools. The total number of students stood at 258. The majority of these students were concentrated in the Centre, Far North, Littoral, and West regions.

Number of Teachers, Students, and Secondary Schools in 2012

Regions	Public Schools	Private Schools	Students	Teachers
Adamawa	1	0	15	1
Centre	1	0	50	2
East	1	0	14	1
Far North	3	1	54	2
Littoral	1	1	50	1
North	0	0	0	1
North-west	1	0	30	2
West	1	0	45	1
South	0	0	0	1
South-west	0	0	0	1
Total	9	2	258	13

II. 3. Chinese Language Curriculum and Textbook

In 2012, there was no official curriculum for Chinese language as a secondary school subject, and teaching activities were based on the textbook *Hello*. This textbook was specially compiled for secondary school students in Cameroon by the Confucius Institute at the University of Yaoundé II. *Hello* features five units, each containing three or four texts, cultural knowledge, and a unit summary. The textbook also includes a list of new words, a Chinese character knowledge sup-

plement, and exercises in translation, dialogue, listening, and reading. The cultural knowledge section introduces students to various aspects of Chinese culture, including greetings, handshakes, and Chinese traditional customs.

III. Rapid Development of Chinese Language Teaching and Learning in Cameroon from 2012 to 2025

This section examines the rapid development of Chinese language teaching and learning in Cameroon's secondary schools over the past decade. It highlights the significant growth in the number of schools, teachers, and students, as well as the contextualisation of the Chinese language teaching curriculum, teacher trainers, and textbooks.

III. 1. Rapid Rise in the Numbers of Schools, Teachers, and Students

The number of schools in Cameroon offering Chinese language classes has grown exponentially over the past decade. In 2012, there were 11 schools (9 public and 2 private) with 258 students. By 2025, the number had risen to 211 schools (157 public and 54 private) with 16,017 students and 286 teachers.

Number of Schools, Teachers, and Students in the 2024-2025 school year

Region	Public schools	Private schools	Students	Teachers
Adamawa	16	1	793	22
Centre	34	26	5456	75
East	12	2	1633	25
Far North	30	7	2364	66
Littoral	12	6	1382	28
North	25	2	1175	28
North-West	3	0	12	2
West	13	1	1400	20
South	11	8	1730	19
South-west	1	1	72	1
Total	157	54	16017	286

The rapid growth in Chinese language teaching and learning led to the appointment of additional national and regional pedagogic inspectors in 2019.

III. 2. Contextualisation of the Chinese language teaching Curriculum

The first Chinese language teaching curriculum was introduced in 2014 for the first cycle, and in 2018, 2019 and 2020 for the second cycle. The curriculum outlines the teaching objectives and content for secondary school Chinese language classes. It emphasises the importance of cultural awareness, language skills, and learning strategies. It also highlights the significance of Sino-African cooperation and friendly relations.

In 2021, the Ministry of Secondary Education revised and published a new Chinese teaching curriculum.

The curriculum is organised around five main domains of life, including Family Life and Social Integration, Health and Environmental Protection, Media and Communication, Economic Life, and Civic Life and Openness to the World. Each domain has associated teaching objectives and class hours.

Outline of Domains of Life and Class Hours

Unit	First cycle Class Hours	Second cycle class hours
Family Life and Social Integration	18hours	21hours
Health, Comfort and Environmental Protection	18 hours	21hours
Media and Communication	18 hours	21hours
Economic Life	18 hours	21hours
Civic Life and Openness to the World	18 hours	21hours

The cultural knowledge objectives listed in the curriculum align with the teaching of aspects of culture and intercultural communication such as:

Learn about the impact of the daily lives of Chinese citizens on China's rapid development.
Understand the role of the current Chinese governmental system in China's rapid development.
Understand the impact of Chinese culture on civic behaviour.
Understand the similarities and differences, advantages and disadvantages of China's family planning policy and Cameroon's related policies.

III .3. Hiring of Local Teacher Trainers at HTTC

As noted above, in 2012 the teaching staff consisted of eight Chinese teachers, all of whom were Chinese nationals. By 2025, however, the teacher-training

staff at HTTC-UMa and HTTC-Bertoua included ten Cameroonian teachers, all of whom were former students of HTTC-UMa who had studied in China on scholarship.

This represents a near-complete transition from a system staffed exclusively by Chinese nationals to one dominated by Cameroonian teachers. This shift became possible as Cameroonian universities began recruiting their own graduates, while the Confucius institute at the University of Yaoundé II progressively reduced the number of Chinese nationals and increasingly recruited Cameroonian instructors.

Number of Students and Teachers in HTTC-UMa and HTTC-Bertouain 2025

Cameroonian teachers	Chinese teachers	Students
10	0	137

III. 4. Contextualisation of Textbooks

In 2015, the National Council for the Approval of Textbooks and Didactic Materials approved *Hello Cameroon* as the official textbook for Chinese language instruction in Cameroon's secondary schools. This textbook was developed by a collaborative research team comprising native Cameroonian teachers and Chinese teachers with experience in teaching Chinese in Cameroon. In 2025, over 200 secondary schools and approximately 15,000 students utilise this textbook series, making *Hello Cameroon* the most widely used Chinese textbook in Cameroonian secondary schools.

The *Hello Cameroon* textbook series consists of five bilingual volumes in Chinese and French, designed for students in the 4^{ème}, 3^{ème}, *Seconde*, *Première*, and *Terminale* classes. The series was compiled in accordance with the Chinese teaching syllabus outlined by Cameroon's Ministry of Secondary Education.

The content of the textbook series is organised around five thematic modules: Family Life and Social Integration, Health and Environmental Protection, Civic Life and Global Awareness, Economic Activities, and Media and Communication. The first two volumes, tailored for the 4^{ème} and 3^{ème} levels, provide clear guidance on teaching grammar and culture. The subsequent volumes, targeting the 2^{nde}, 1^{ère}, and Tle levels, cover a range of topics, including:

- Rural and urban life in Cameroon
- Chinese geography and cities
- Youth and society
- Chinese history and art
- Social associations and cultural practices

- Private and official correspondence
- Chinese civilisation and philosophy (Laozi and Confucius)
- International African organisations and global issues
- Chinese literature and Cameroonian history
- Sino-African cooperation and African development

In 2023, following the revision and publication of a new curriculum for the first cycle by the Ministry of Secondary Education, the National Council for the Approval of Textbooks and Didactic Materials officially approved *I love Chinese* as the national textbook for Chinese language instruction in Cameroon's lower-secondary education classes. This textbook was developed by a collaborative research team composed primarily of native Cameroonian teachers.

IV. Problems Related to Chinese Language Teaching/Learning in Secondary Education in Cameroon

Despite the rapid development of Chinese language teaching and learning in Cameroon's secondary schools, several challenges persist, including issues with the Higher Teacher Training College (HTTC), the secondary school Chinese language syllabus, the uneven distribution of native Cameroonian Chinese language teachers, and the lack of adequate training programmes for in-service teachers. These aspects are examined in the following sub-sections.

IV. 1. The Higher Teacher Training College (HTTC)

The HTTC faces three primary challenges: an inappropriate Chinese teaching curriculum, insufficient teaching periods, and a shortage of lecturers.

4.1.1 Inappropriate Chinese Language Curriculum at the Higher Teacher Training College

The Chinese language curriculum used at HTTC-UMa does not align with the needs of Cameroonian secondary school Chinese teachers. The curriculum was designed by native Chinese teachers from the Confucius Institute at the University of Yaoundé II, who may not have been familiar with the specific requirements and standards of the Cameroonian Ministry of Secondary Education. As a result, the teaching content does not fully meet the needs of native Cameroonian secondary school Chinese teachers.

IV .1. 2. Insufficient Number of Teaching Periods for Chinese Courses

The number of teaching periods allocated to Chinese courses at HTTC-UMa is insufficient. Over time, these periods have been gradually reduced. Initially, major Chinese courses were each allocated 112 hours. This was later reduced to 72 hours. The current allocation is limited to 36 hours. Similarly, minor Chinese

courses were originally allocated 56 hours. This was initially reduced to 48 hours, and current allocations include only 24 hours. Although the course content has remained unchanged, the instructional time devoted to these courses has been significantly reduced.

This reduction in teaching hours is likely to have a negative impact on the quality of teacher training (Hulda and Gonondo, 2022, pp. 86-107).

This sharp reduction in instructional time creates a serious mismatch between the ambitious objectives of Chinese language training and the actual learning conditions provided to trainee teachers. Given the complexity of Chinese with a non-alphabetic writing system, such limited exposure is insufficient to ensure the development of adequate linguistic, pedagogical, and intercultural competencies.

IV. 1. 3. Insufficient Number of Lecturers at HTTC

Hulda and Gonondo (2022, pp. 86-107) noted that from the beginning of the Chinese language programme (in 2008) until 2013, all lecturers at HTTC were from the Confucius Institute (C.I.). Since 2014, the Cameroonian government has been responding progressively to address the shortage of lecturers. They also noticed that from 2014, the number of lecturers sent by the C.I. to HTTC-UMa has progressively reduced. Whereas in 2014, ten lecturers were sent by the C.I., by 2022, only two lecturers were dispatched to HTTC-UMa.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, there were four levels (Levels Two and Three for the first cycle, and Levels One and Two for the second cycle). The above description makes evident that there were 9 different levels of students to be trained by 6 lecturers.

In the 2025 academic year, the number of lecturers devoted to the training of Chinese language teachers was limited to three for five levels at HTTC-UMa and three for four levels at HTTC-Bertoua.

The foregoing description shows clearly that the number of levels has increased, while the number of lecturers has gradually decreased. The progressive decrease in the number of lecturers has led to a situation where there is less than one lecturer per level.

This situation would ineluctably affect training quality and efficiency, thus adversely impacting the proficiency and competences of secondary school Chinese language teachers.

IV. 2. Secondary School Chinese Language Curriculum

The Chinese language curriculum for secondary schools in Cameroon has been identified as a major issue. According to Nama (2018), the main problems include irrational time allocation and teaching objectives, as well as unclearly de-

efined and irrational language teaching objectives. Although the Ministry of Secondary Education revised and published a new Chinese teaching programme in 2023, which addressed the issue of unclearly defined and irrational language teaching objectives, the problem of irrational time allocation and teaching objectives persists.

The blending of time schedules and teaching objectives is a critical element to consider when formulating a curriculum. Cameroon's Ministry of Secondary Education under-targets the teaching of foreign languages, allocating 72 hours of teaching time for the first cycle and 108 hours of teaching time for second cycle, per academic year. All foreign languages in the Cameroonian secondary education system have the same general teaching objectives and time, which may not be suitable for Chinese due to its unique characteristics such as Chinese characters.

IV. 3. Uneven Distribution of Native Cameroonian Chinese Language Teachers in Secondary Schools

The distribution of native Cameroonian Chinese language teachers in secondary schools is uneven, with some schools being overstaffed while others are understaffed. This has resulted in underemployment and over employment of teachers, with some teachers having as few as 2 to 3 teaching hours per week. According to Article 66 of Decree No 2000/359 of December 05, 2000, all civil servants in the teaching corps are required to provide weekly teaching or service set at 18 hours for high school teachers and 20 hours for secondary schoolteachers.

The statistics reveal that teachers from various schools have about 2 to 3 teaching hours per week instead of the 18 to 20 hours required by the regulations. The highest number of teaching hours per week is 15, which still falls short of the required 18 to 20 hours (Nama, 2021, pp. 209-219).

IV. 4. Lack of Adequate Training Programmes for In-Service Teachers

Most student teachers graduating from the Chinese language programme at HTTC lack sufficient teaching skills. After graduating, those who land full-time teaching roles in secondary schools must continue receiving appropriate teacher training to update their concepts of education, improve their general skills, and contribute to the improvement of the general quality of the Chinese language teaching force in secondary schools.

According to the interview with the Director of the Confucius Institute at UYII and some regional pedagogic inspectors in charge of Chinese, CI-UYII organises one or two seminars annually. The regional pedagogic inspector in charge of Chinese also mentioned that they organise 1 or 2 seminars each year. Howe-

ver, given the significant shortage in the number of teaching periods allocated to student teachers during their initial training, one or two seminars per year are insufficient to meet the needs of in-service teachers.

V. Recommendations

The challenges identified in this study require coordinated and sustained interventions from key institutional stakeholders involved in Chinese language education in Cameroon. These recommendations are grounded in empirical findings and are designed to enhance the quality, equity, and sustainability of Chinese language teaching in secondary education.

V. 1. Recommendations to the Ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC)

As the supervisory authority for secondary education in Cameroon, MINESEC plays a central role in strategic planning, human resource management, and pedagogical guidance for educational institutions. The following recommendations aim to optimise the governance of Chinese language teaching and to ensure better alignment between educational provision and field-level needs.

V.1.1. Strategic Optimisation of Human Resources

The uneven distribution of Cameroonian Chinese language teachers has resulted in both underemployment and inefficient use of public resources. It is recommended that MINESEC conduct a national audit of Chinese language teaching posts, mapping teaching hours, student enrolment, and regional demand. Based on this audit, a rational redeployment plan should be implemented to ensure that each teacher meets the statutory weekly workload (18–20 hours), while underserved schools receive adequate staffing.

Furthermore, in order to maximise learner motivation and long-term programme viability, teacher deployment should take into account regional socio-economic specificities, including local interest in foreign languages, presence of Chinese enterprises, and cross-border economic activities.

V.1.2. Institutionalisation of Chinese Language Teaching in Technical Education

Given the growing demand for technically skilled, Chinese-speaking personnel by Chinese enterprises operating in Cameroon, Chinese language instruction should be formally introduced into technical and vocational secondary schools. This integration would align language education with national employment priorities and facilitate technology transfer.

A Chinese-for-Specific-Purposes (CSP) curriculum tailored to technical fields

(engineering, construction, logistics, agriculture, and manufacturing) should be developed, with clearly defined communicative objectives focused on workplace interaction rather than academic proficiency alone.

V.2. Recommendations to the Centre for Language Education and Cooperation and Pedagogic Inspectors

The Centre for Language Education and Cooperation, together with pedagogic inspectors, is responsible for the design, adaptation, and monitoring of teaching programmes. Their role is crucial in harmonising pedagogical content and providing professional support to teachers. The recommendations below address curricular adjustment and the strengthening of continuous professional development.

V.2.1. Rationalisation of Teaching Objectives and Instructional Time

The current secondary school Chinese language curriculum places excessive demands on learners within a limited instructional timeframe. It is therefore recommended that curriculum objectives be prioritised and streamlined, with greater emphasis placed on listening, speaking, and reading competencies, while reducing the compulsory requirements for Chinese character writing.

Teaching objectives should be calibrated to match realistic learning outcomes within the annual teaching time allocation, thereby ensuring coherence between time, content, and expected proficiency levels.

V.2.2. Strengthening and Institutionalising In-service Teacher Training

While existing in-service training initiatives represent a positive step, their limited frequency is insufficient to address the pedagogical gaps identified in this study. It is recommended that continuous professional development (CPD) be institutionalised through:

- Regular regional training workshops (at least one per term);
- Blended training models combining face-to-face seminars with online modules;
- Structured mentoring systems linking experienced teachers with newly recruited staff.

Training content should focus on classroom management, curriculum interpretation, assessment strategies, and contextualised teaching methods suitable for Cameroonian learners.

V.3. Recommendations to the Higher Teacher Training College (HTTC-UMa and HTTC-Bertoua)

The Higher Teacher Training Colleges constitute the main mechanism for the initial training of Chinese language teachers in Cameroon. The quality of this training directly determines the professional competence of future teachers and, consequently, the effectiveness of Chinese language teaching in secondary schools. The following recommendations aim to strengthen the relevance and effectiveness of the teacher training curriculum.

V.3.1. Alignment of Teacher Training Curriculum with Secondary School Needs

The Chinese language teacher training curriculum at HTTC should be redesigned to align more closely with the secondary school Chinese curriculum, pedagogical objectives, and classroom realities. Course content should integrate:

- Practical teaching methodologies;
- Secondary school curriculum analysis;
- Lesson planning and assessment design;
- Classroom-based teaching practice.

Such alignment would ensure that graduating teachers possess not only linguistic competence but also the pedagogical skills required for effective classroom implementation.

V.3.2. Reinforcement of Teaching Time and Academic Staffing

To safeguard training quality, the progressive reduction in teaching periods for Chinese language courses should be reconsidered. Adequate instructional time is essential for developing both language proficiency and teaching competence.

In addition, targeted recruitment of qualified lecturers—both nationally and through international academic cooperation—should be prioritised to restore an appropriate lecturer-to-student and lecturer-to-level ratio. This would significantly enhance training effectiveness and learning outcomes.

V.3.3. Promotion of Inter-Institutional and Inter-Teacher Collaboration

HTTCs should actively promote structured platforms for collaboration among Chinese language lecturers and teacher trainers. Regular pedagogical forums, joint curriculum review sessions, and collaborative research projects would facilitate knowledge sharing and contribute to the continuous improvement of training programmes.

V.4. Cross-Cutting Recommendation: Policy Coordination and Long-Term Planning

Finally, the study recommends the establishment of a national coordination framework involving MINESEC, the Centre for Language Education and Co-

peration, Confucius Institutes and teacher-training institutions. Such a framework would support coherent policy formulation, data sharing, and long-term strategic planning for Chinese language education in Cameroon.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has provided a comprehensive evaluation of the more than a decade-long evolution of Chinese language teaching and learning in Cameroon's secondary education system. The findings reveal a rapid growth in the number of schools, teachers, and students, but also highlight several challenges that need to be addressed.

The study identifies key issues such as an inappropriate Chinese language curriculum, insufficient teaching periods, and an inadequate number of lecturers at the Higher Teacher Training College. In addition, the limited number of language teachers in secondary schools and the lack of adequate training programmes for in-service teachers are significant concerns.

To address these challenges, the study makes several recommendations, including optimising the use of human resources, introducing Chinese language in the secondary school technical education sector, rationalising teaching time and objectives, and improving the teacher training curriculum at HTTC. Strengthening in-service training programmes for teachers is also crucial for enhancing their skills and knowledge.

By implementing these recommendations, stakeholders can work together to improve the quality of Chinese language education in Cameroon's secondary schools. This, in turn, can contribute to the development of a more skilled and knowledgeable workforce better equipped to engage with China's growing economic and cultural presence in Africa.

Ultimately, this study contributes to the growing body of research on Chinese language education in Africa and provides valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders. By understanding the challenges and opportunities in Chinese language education, we can work towards creating a more effective and sustainable education system that benefits both Cameroon and China.

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