

## DIDACTICS AND RESEARCH IN AFRICAN ENDANGERED LANGUAGES AND CULTURES IN CAMEROON. VISION 2030.

**Emmanuel Nforbi (Phd)\***

*\*Associate Professor of linguistics, University of Dschang, Cameroon. Head of Department, African Studies and Globalization, Head of African Studies and Globalization laboratory, Vice-Chair, Society for Cameroonian Languages and Cultures.*

**\*Corresponding Author:-**

*Email: [nforbiemma@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nforbiemma@yahoo.co.uk)*

---

*This paper argues that for African languages to survive in the future, some serious procedures need to be adopted and followed. It is important to note that every enterprise without a written version is bound to take a direction that it might not prefer. Within the next ten years, Africans have to join the rest of the world to work towards the realization of the sustainable development goals. The target of 2030 is in line with stipulated end of the implementation of these goals. When we understand that the riches and world view of Africa has been communicated in its languages, we can with assurance recognize that African languages and cultures carry the essentials of its development resources. They can only be made available through innovations in didactics and research. What are the pedagogical and didactic approaches towards endangered African languages and cultures? What kind of research and publications? Who should be responsible?*

**The 20<sup>th</sup> edition of Ethnologue, 2017, indicate 284 languages in Cameroon.** It was discovered that not all these languages have publications. On investigations, I discovered that these languages are essentially minority languages. They are in the following categories: vigorous, endangered, threatened, shifting, in comma, dead or extinct. The 1919 edition indicates 283 with 274 living and 9 extinct. This indicates that at least one Cameroonian language has died within the last two years. The 1919 edition states that there are 7111 languages in the world with 28 dead since 1918. If this trend is not disturbed, 280 languages of the world, the equivalence of all Cameroonian languages would have died by the year 2030. This paper is a contribution towards disturbing this trend.

The 22 edition of Ethnologue classifies the Cameroonian languages as follows: 12 institutional, 98 developing, 70 vigorous, 76 in trouble and 18 dying. The last two categories sum to 94 indicating the number of endangered languages in Cameroon. Language vitality in the world has been maintained through usage. The official languages of Cameroon; French and English, have survived since independence through their presence in the educational system and their official status. We will not expect endangered languages to be official languages. On the other hand, we will want to benefit from the socio-cultural riches those languages carry. Reflections on revitalization should hinge on didactics. Since endangered languages are generally of low vitality, we need a more adapted approach to deal with these languages that are fragile.

## **A REVIEW OF THE LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

It is important to review the traditional African educational system so as to see what can be appreciated and adopted for the future. It should be noted that over the centuries, Africa has been very influential in the oral tradition. Training in oral tradition was very organized and effective. The advantage of the traditional language educational system is that it laid emphasis on performance and the oratory skills. Different national instances of oral performance existed. With the absence of audio visual devices, the only available entertainment source was oral life performances.

## **THE STORY SERIES**

In the evening, in family circles, storytelling was an entertainment and educational procedure. Children would gather around their parents to listen to stories. In reality, we used to request our parents to tell us stories. These stories narrated in the language gave room for us to learn the spoken language and the lessons behind them. Some of the stories were accompanied by songs and some of these songs are still in my mind today. Besides the stories which were of several genres; oral tales, legends and myths, we had riddles and jokes. These stories gave room for the various aspects of the language and its moral lessons to be expressed.

We could learn why certain things are the way they are:

- Why the lizard nods its head
- Why the hawk eats chicks
- Why the pig digs the ground
- Why the praying mantis prays
- Why water spirits live in the water
- Why the lion eats goats
- Why the tortoise has a scattered shell etc

The *why* story explains imponderables. It gets its inspiration from the background to explain certain phenomena and behaviours. All of these carry with them moral lessons besides their didactic implications. The origins of villages, tribes and other unknown phenomena are explained in myths and legends. These genres stabilized the growing child who ends up being patriotic and confident of his environment.

## **CEREMONIES**

Ceremonies like births, marriages, deaths, and initiations had linguistic performances that educated those present. The oral performances in each of these contexts made it possible to master the songs, proverbs, incantations and other oral performances needed. Some of these ceremonies and rituals were reserved for restricted initiates. In order to get into some groups where specific performances are performed, you needed to be initiated. The conditions to be fulfilled for these processes were known. You must be of a certain age, be able to provide the needed requirements; goats, cocks, hens, palm wine, cola, traditional meals, etc. These were affordable and made accession to these groups easy. This was considered a promotion to the next level just like promotion exams are organized in the formal educational process today.

Accession into the higher society was hence predictable. At each occasion, new linguistic performances and moral values were acquired. It was possible to know who should master every aspect of the language by dint of his/her position in the society. It was predictably convincing that such a notable carried the standard version of the language and can hence speak and teach others. Such were the teachers, the intellectuals of those days and respected people as such.

## **THE PRESENT DAY TRADITIONAL SCHOOLS**

The present day traditional societies have witnessed adjustments as a result of globalization. The presence of foreign languages and cultures has penetrated every neck and crony. *MTN, everywhere you go*. Solar energy, and generators subsidized green energy to open doors for cultures of the world to every house, village, tribe and nations. The Android carries languages and cultures which are forcefully arresting the linguistic and moral assets of African youths. In their rooms, under their blankets, they are swallowing doses of strange and unproductive cultures in the place of stories told of old around the fire in the homes. The content of what they see and hear in the rooms under their blankets is known by them alone. The result is strange and hostile behaviors which cannot be identified with their families. Hostilities, insecurity

amongst youths, unemployment and underdevelopment is the result of the lost peaceful cultures replaced by unknown and contradictory ones. This calls for a reflection on the future.

### **INDICATORS OF THE FUTURE**

A clear indicator of the way forward is the revitalization of African languages and cultures. The linguistic and cultural artifacts are disappearing with their moral, entertainment and didactic virtues. In a context where cultural issues are not well managed, strange and disgusting cultures can easily come in and become destructive. There will be no antidote to dangerous actions whose origins are unknown.

### **TOWARD A REVIVAL OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES EDUCATION AND CULTURES**

The needed primordial action is to continue to pose actions that will draw the interest of the youth. Expressions in African languages and traditions (EXALT) Series is one of the ways out. One of the strong points of modern education is the emphasis on the written tradition. The emphasis on written tradition has increased literacy rates among younger people than ever before. What they read and write are foreign languages that have become our official languages. More and more, youths who can read and write official languages are unable to make a sentence in an African language. It is like the more they get literate in official languages, they get more and more ignorant of their own languages and cultures.

### **INTRODUCTION OF EXALT IN ALL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS**

Expressions in African languages and cultures is intended to build the bridge between the past and the present so as to build a road to the future. Fortunately, in African languages, we still have those who can perform oral traditions and cultures. We need to register them in didactic audio visual forms and make them available in the educational system. We need to teach them the writing systems and encourage them to create their own stories. When young people are able to write stories in their languages and read them, they will learn the languages and cultures indirectly. The process of editing is an educational process par excellence. The contents of the stories are edited to filter dangerous ideas and encourage them to bring in constructive ideas.

### **PUBLISHING AND DISTRIBUTION**

Publishing and distribution houses of African languages and cultures need to be encouraged. Most of the existing editing and publishing structures are not adjusted to African languages. Translating and publication of stories in African languages is one of the ways to revive interest in African languages. One of the innovations in the Councils should be to have trained specialists of the language in the communication department. The publishing houses of languages in municipalities should be in the councils. They should be an editing board and book store in the council. Those who come for Civil marriages, birth certificates, etc should be able to get copies.

### **REVIEW OF PROGRAMMES OF LINGUISTIC DEPARTMENTS**

University Departments that handle African languages and cultures are supposed to be more practical. The students should be able to work on specific languages, collect data, analyze them and produce didactic material in those languages. They should be trained to develop unwritten languages so as to preserve them. They should be able to identify languages that need assistance and create a possibility.

An immediate action will be to make an inventory of least developed languages and fund them within the next ten years. Linguists of the different Departments should orientate research on these languages. This should be done in collaboration with the related councils. In collaboration with the related councils, language committee members should be trained on language development, grammar, literacy, didactics, and translation, etc. They should be a multimedia centre in each council for the promotion of the languages and cultures. They should collaborate with the university Departments that have the expertise.

### **TEACHER TRAINING**

Every educational system depends on the teachers. The Department of Cameroonian Languages and Cultures at the Teacher Training College in Yaounde is of vital importance. Those who graduate from this Department should be sent to the councils. They should work in the Language Department of the Councils. They will help the councils to train native speakers of the locality to send them to schools of the locality. Their presence in the schools should be for inspection.

This proposal comes up because the number trained in ENS is limited. Besides, they are not always from the localities where they are sent. They are experts, when they leave the Teacher Training and can serve as facilitators to train native speakers in councils. In reality, councils should be language and culture training centers to train teachers of the municipality. Part of the budget of the council should be allocated to this activity.

When the universities, Teacher Training Colleges work together with the councils, the revival of African languages and cultures will be guaranteed. When a Centre for Cameroonian Languages and Cultures is created at the national level, it will coordinate these activities. It will identify didactic materials, training, editing and publishing needs and coordinate them.

### **The role of research and publications in the revitalization process of the minority endangered African Languages.**

It is evident that for any unwritten language to evolve especially in this era of globalization and sophisticated information technology, it should be digitalized. This implies a writing system which comes through research. Sociolinguistic survey, choice of standard reference dialect, phonological studies and an orthography design. Research in morphology, syntax

and the overall grammar predispose the language for literacy didactic materials. Literacy programmes are needed for reading and writing. Necessarily, it is not always native speakers of the various languages who develop them. Students are generally obliged to carry out most of their research in linguistics Department as partial fulfilment of the conditions for the award of various degrees. Once the degree is obtained, many do not continue to apply the results of their findings. They should be encouraged to do so.

The international center for research and documentation on African traditions and languages known by his French acronym as CERDOTOLA, 2012 did an excellent job when the various research publications in Cameroonian languages was published. It was a great eye opener because it made it possible to identify what has been done in each language and what is still needed to be done. That document should be a guiding document for all researchers in Cameroonian languages. The CERDOTOLA 2012 published bibliographical collection of Cameroonian languages with origins from 2008, indicates the number of publications per language. From a study of this book, we realize that some languages were not present. On investigation, it shows that these languages are not developed because of their low vitality based on the above mentioned criteria. They fall in the category of endangered languages

### **THE FATE OF THE MINORITY ENDANGERED LANGUAGES IN CAMEROON.**

The most visited criteria for language vitality include the following:

- Inter-generational transmission
- Number of speakers
- Integration in new domains and media.
- The number and quality of publications in this language as well as its use in the educational system.

The table below indicate languages of low vitality in Cameroon.

LANGUAGE	REGION	AUTHOR
01. Ajumbu	North West Region 200	Good et al 2011
02. Akum	North West Region 1,400	SIL 2002
03. Atong	North West Region 4,200	SIL 2000
04. Baba	North West Region 24,500	SIL 2005
05. Bafaw-Balong	Littoral Region, South West Region 8, 400	SIL 1982
06. Bafia	Centre Region 60,000	UBS 1991 (Vigorous)
07. Bakaka	Littoral Region 30,000	SIL 1998
08. Balo	South West Region 2,230	2000
09. Bamenyam	North West Region, West Region 4,000	SIL 1994 (Vigorous)
10. Bamukumbit	North West Region 12,000	SIL 2008
11. Bamunka	North West Region	
12. Barombi	South West Region 3000	SIL 2001
13. Bassossi	South West Region 5,000	SIL 2004 (Vigorous)
14. Beba	North West Region	
15. Beezen	North West Region	
16. Bekwel	East Region	
17. Bikya	North West Region	B. Connell 2000
18. Bishuo	North West Region	
19. Bitare	Adamawa Region 6,000	2000 (Vigorous)
20. Bomwali	East Region 61000	2000 (Vigorous)
21. Bonkeng	Littoral Region 3,000	2000
22. Bung	Adamawa Region	Dimmendaal and Voeltz 2007. Nearly extinct in 1998, (Dimmendaal and Voeltz 2007)
23. Busuu	North West Region	R. Breton 1986
24. Byep	East Region 9,500	SIL 1988
25. Caka	South West Region 5000	Dieu and Renaud 1983
26. Chungmboko	North West Region 2,000	SIL 2001
27. Dii	Adamawa Region, North Region 50,000	L. Bohnhoff 2010
28. Dimbong	Centre Region 140	SIL 1992, Ethnic population 50,000
29. Elip	Centre Region 6,400	SIL 1982 (Developing)
30. Eman	South West Region 800	SIL 1990 (Threatened)
31. Evant	South West Region	
32. Gimme	North Region 3,000	SIL 1982
33. Gimmime	North Region 3,000	SIL 1982 (Vigorous)
34. Iceve-Maci	South Region 7,000	1990. Total users in all countries: 12,000
35. Iyive	South West Region, Nigeria border, 1000	WT 1996. Total users in all countries: 2,000 (Vigorous)
36. Jukun Takum	North West Region 2,440	2000
37. Kamkam	Adamawa Region	Vigorous
38. Kemedzung	North West Region 3,540	Misaje Council 2008 (Developing)
39. Kolbila	North Region 2,500	L. Lobe 1997 (Developing)

40. Koma	North Region 3,000	SIL 1984
41. Korop	South West Region 7,440	Dimmendaal and Voeltz 2007
42. Koshin	North West Region 3,000	Good el al 2011 (Threatened)
43. Kuk	North West Region 3,000	SIL 1993 (Threatened)
44. Kung	North West Region 600	Good el al 2011 (Moribund)
45. Kutep	North West Region 1,400	R. Breton 1986
46. Kwaja	North West Region 2,980	2000 (Vigorous)
47. La'bi	North Region 4,400 all users	Samarin 1971 (2006) (Second Language only)
48. Laimbue	North West Region	
49. Luo	Adamawa Region	B. Connell 1995 (Nearly extinct)
50. Malimba	Littoral Region 2,230	SIL 2001 (Vigorous)
51. Manta	South West Region 5,300	SIL 2001 (Threatened)
52. Mbudum	Far North Region	
53. Mesaka	North West Region, South West Region 14,000	SIL 1982
54. Moloko	Far North Region 8,500	SIL 1992 (Developing)
55. Mom Jango	North Region, Nigeria border, north of Tchamba, 6520	2000
56. Mpumpong	East Region 45000	SIL 1991
57. Mundabli	North West Region 500	Good el al (Threatened)
58. Mungbam	North West Region 1,850	Good el al 2011 (Threatened)
59. Ndaktup	North West Region 2,980(2000)	
60. Ndoola	Adamawa Region 2,120	2000, 3 elderly speakers in Dodeo dialect, SIL 2014 (Moribund)
61. Ngamambo	North West Region	
62. Ngemba	North West Region 18,800	SIL 2002 (Vigorous)
63. Nimbari	North Region	
64. Njen	North West Region 1,800	SIL 2002
65. Njyem	East Region 4,400. (3,750 monolinguals. Total users in all countries : 7,900)	SIL 2005; C. Hamm 2014 (Developing)
66. Nkongho	Littoral Region 2,230	2000 (Threatened)
67. Nyong	North West Region 30,000	SIL 2008
68. Nzakambay	North Region 13,000	2000 (Developing)
69. Osatu	South West Region 400	SIL 2002 (Threatened)
70. Pévé	North Region 5,720	? 2000 (Vigorous)
71. Pol	East Region 38,700	2000. Total users in all countries 44,130
72. Suga	Adamawa Region	
73. Tibeá	Centre Region 1,400	SIL 1992
74. Tuotomb	Centre Region	
75. Twendi	Adamawa Region 30 Ethnic population: 1,000	B. Connell 2000 SIL 1991
76. Uesaghade	South West Region 10,000	B. Connell 1990 (Threatened)
77. Wawa	Adamawa Region, 700 in Gandua dialect	SIL 1991, SIL 2014 (Threatened)
78. Weh	North West Region 8000	SIL 1993
79. Yambeta	Centre Region 3,700	SIL 1982 (Threatened)
80. Yangben	Centre Region 2,300	SIL 1994 (Threatened)
81. Yeni	Adamawa Region	No known L1 speakers (Extinct)
82. Yukuben	North West Region 950	R. Breton 1986
83. Zhoa	North West Region 2000	Troyer el al 1995
84. Zumaya	Far North Region	No known L1 speakers 2006 (Extinct)

## UNDERDEVELOPED LANGUAGES

This summary indicates the following figures:

REGION	FIGURES
Adamawa	2
North	1
Far North	4
North West	16
South West	15
East	5
Centre	4
Littoral	5
West	1
South	2

**Some of the languages like the following have died:**

REGION	LANGUAGE
North West	Bikya, Bishio
Adamawa	Luo, Yeni
South West	Ninzea, Isu

**In danger: 22**

Ajumbu , Atong, Bakaka, Balo, Barombi, Beba Beezen, Caka, Evant, Eman, Koshin, Kuk, Manla, Umaala, Umdaloh, Mungbam, Nkongho, Osatu, Tibe, Usan hade, Yambeta, Zho.

**Vigorous: 28**

Akum, Baba, Bafon-balong, Bafia, Bassossi, Bakwel, Bitare, Bomwali, Bonleng, Byep, Gimme, Gmnime. Leeve-Maci, Iyive, Lanlon, Lorop, Lwansh, Laimbue, Mahimba, Mesaka, Monjango, Mpumpong, Njen, Peve, Pol, Suga, Weh, Yuluban.

Developing: Bamikumbit, Bamunla, Chungubolo, Dii, Elip, Julum Takun, Lemedzung, Lolibi, Lutep, Njyem.

**Amount disappearing: 3**

Bung, Busuu, Lung, Luo, Twendi.

**Dead: 4**

Bikya, Bisuo, Yeni, Zumoya.

**Shifting:** Dimbong, Tuotomb

**L2:** Laibi

**In comma:** Nimbari, Ndoola, Nimbari

The general observation is that most of these languages are situated in the northwest and south-west regions. About 30 are from this region. Pidgin is a social language that runs across this area and highly favored in communicative events. What we can observe is that most of the surveys were done at least 10 years ago. About 10 were done in the eighties, and about 15 in the nineties. About 25 of these languages were surveyed in the last century over 20 years ago. So much would have changed by now.

About 40 were studied from the years 2000 with only 4 within the last 10 years. The earliest in 2015. We can therefore conclude that the situation of the languages as presented might not be the same today. There is therefore need to revisit these languages to know their present status.

**Training in sociolinguistic survey**

One of the areas for training will hence be in the sociolinguistic survey of endangered vigorous, developing and threatened languages. We need to know their current status. This will orientate research in these languages. Future studies in language endangerment, documentation and vitality would be useful if they classify the present status of these languages.

**Areas of research**

Considering the fast socio-cultural changes in our era as a result of information technology, it is certain that the status of the languages in problems have changed positively or negatively. Most of these surveys were done decades ago. An important area of research will be to see the present status of less developed languages. For those that are still vigorous, it will be necessary to do a sociolinguistic survey for identification of standard reference dialect, eventually a phonology, and an orthography and grammar sketch.

These languages have been submerged by the high presence of Pidgin and Fulfulde which are vernacular languages in the North West, South West and Adamawa respectively. Out of the 48 endangered languages with no publications, over 30 are in the North West and South West. This is evidence that the high presence of Pidgin in these regions is imposing its dominance since it serves as a vernacular language. It equally replaces the Mother Tongues in several communicative events; market, church, gatherings, etc.

This category of languages need to receive adequate attention. Each of them represent a cultural heritage that is endangered. It is therefore necessary to include a special budget in the councils where these languages are found. The department in charge of languages and cultures of the municipality, in collaboration with the traditional authorities, should recruit native speakers of these languages that will be trained to standardize the language and develop it in all its aspects. Research students in the various universities should as well take research topics in these areas. In fact, the basic standardization of all African languages (BASAL) project launched by the National Association for Cameroonian languages committees in the nineties was meant for this purpose. This project actually had as objective to send a volunteer researcher on the language, preferably, a research student. His role was to develop an aspect of the language for his academic research. Definitely, some minimal financial support was needed for this exercise. It is the absence of funding

that brought this project to a halt. With the revival of NACALCO and its BASAL project, the vitality of the endangered languages will be guaranteed.

### **Status of languages and their vitality**

#### **Vehicular and cross border languages**

A language like Fulfulde has benefited from this status. It is used across vast territories thus subduing minority languages in its context. The fact that it had native speakers makes it much more stable than pidgin. Pidgin, though a vehicular language, running across the Anglophone region of Cameroon and beyond, suffers from lack of native speakers. Even though much research has been done on it, it will be difficult to propagate it in literacy. It lacks prestige even though a language of social communication.

#### **Languages that have had missionary influence**

Duala, Bassa, Ewondo Mungaka are examples in this category. The high level of missionary influence gave them a high status in religion. Their influences at cross borders have improved on the vitality of these languages. Languages like Gbaya, Mofur Gudur and Kanuri have benefited from stable researchers who published much on these languages.

#### **Literacy and Translation activities in the language**

As a scientific coordinator in the national association for Cameroonian languages committee (NACALCO), head of department and head of a research unit for African studies and the diaspora, I am well versed with the situation in the field, literacy has been very influential in the vitality of Cameroonian languages. The vitality of Cameroonian languages that benefited from the colonial masters went beyond boundaries. Mungaka in the grass field, Duala, Bassa, Bulu amongst others had hymn books which thousands of Christian faithful's mastered so as to sing in church. My father, though not very educated could read Mungaka which was not his mother tongue. The missionary impetus spread to Bible translations which have come to be the largest projects in Cameroonian languages. During the translation period, there is a dynamic presence of reading and writing of the language. Scripture in use is put in place by the association for Bible translation and literacy (CABTAL). This is to enable the community to read the scriptures. Generally when the Bible translation is over and the Bible is dedicated, the communities do not take over the project. The result is that few people are able to read the books that have been produced.

#### **The presence of a research team in the language**

Languages that have had researchers stable in the community generally have more publications than the other languages. When you take a language like Ngiemboon whose vitality is not very high, Anderson's publications give the impression that it is very vital. Such is the case with the Holingworths in the Mofur Gudur, Keith Beavon with Konzime, and Joseph Nforyam with Bafut etc. This is to say that the number of publications will not always indicate the level of vitality of a language. On the contrary, a stable presence of the language in the educational system, be it formal or informal, guarantees the vitality of the languages. That is why English and French, though inherited languages from the colonial masters are of a higher vitality in Africa than most African languages.

A language like Awing which in 2008 had about 6 publications now has close to 20 as a result of researchers like Dr. Helen Akem a native speaker who had done her masters and PH.D theses on the language with additional publications. What this language needs now is a stable literacy program where more didactic materials can be produced in the process. Where there are no literacy activities, publications are dormant. I found this with Tikar, Mambiila, Mundani, Meta, and Bafut as I went through these communities.

#### **Towards the revitalization of endangered and threatened publications**

Twenty years ago I visited a minority language at the start of its standardization process in Ghana called Selee. At that same time I was involved in the standardization process of another Cameroonian language in the north-west called infinite. In an article published in the African journal of applied linguistics, AJAL 2000, I made a comparative and contrastive analysis of the strategies used in the two countries (Ghana and Cameroon). This article is still very relevant to anyone about to start the standardization of a minority African language. AJAL, No 2 2000 which content this article might no more be available. The copy I got had long disappeared in the hands of my students. That article is endangered. It might even be almost extinct. In the early nineties, I had the privilege to join the prolific operational research project for language education in Cameroon, known by its French acronym as (PROPELCA). My African languages mentor and thesis supervisor asked the members of the team under him to provide me with the existing documentation on the project (the PROPELCA series). I waited for it in vain. I could read some here and there. There was a rich inventory of titles but no concrete articles or books available but for a few. I kept on thinking that one day I will see at least a package of everything published within the project. The project grew and won international recognition. The head of the team won the prestigious Linguapax Prize. He eventually passed away suddenly leaving behind the richest of bibliographical entries in mother tongue education in Cameroon. The PROPELCA series which we directed went to over one hundred entries. We can comfortably classify them as vigorous, endangered, threatened, comma, nearly extinct, or extinct. They will never be dead since the ideas keep on living in disciples like me and many others.

One of the major projects of the decade before us will be to revitalize all publications in Cameroonian languages, preserve them and make them available. The soft versions might be extinct. We might need to digitalize them and put them online. Most of these publications were not online. Revitalizing African languages will include revitalizing research results found in foreign publishing houses. Since it is prestigious and even easier to publish in foreign journals, most of the African

knowledge ends up in those foreign journals. If they are not online, that knowledge will end up in foreign libraries and publishing houses. I do not know how easy it is for the average Bafut person to obtain a copy of the Bafut Grammar published in 2009.

Even though the author of blessed memory was a native speaker, the book is now a property of the publishing house and not the Bafut people. How can such publications and many others on African languages be made available in the councils where the languages are spoken. Over the decades, linguistics students have carried out research on our languages. Some of those research papers though pertinent were never published. Some were presented in seminars and conferences. Some term papers, long essays, maitrise, DEA, masters troisieme cycle, Doctorat/PH.D. Doctorat d'etat, Aggregation etc. we need this research results. Those done by our colonial master stocked in their libraries, we need copies. The endangered language documented and stored, thanks for the efforts, we need copies.

### THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DSCHANG IN THE PROMOTION OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES

The Department of African Studies and Globalizations of the University of Dschang, has over sixty research entries that were not included in the 2008 CERDOTOLA, Bibliographical entry.

They fall within the following categories:

Ethnology, tons, standardization, semantics and lexicology, translations, didactics, language and development, literacy, grammar, standardization, digital education, vitality, morphology, sociolinguistics, syntax and oral literature.

The following languages have been exploited in these research works: see appendix

Mboo	Konzime	Oku
Bafaw-Balong	Mofur-Gudur	Oroko
Yemba	Lamnso'	Bafut
Medumba	Ejagham	Mengaka
Kom	Bassa	Fang
Awing	Bakweri	Mankon
Ngombale	Kenyang	Nweh
Ngomba	Fe'fe	Lamnso'
Nguemboon	Ngemba	4 Chadian languages
Limbum	Ewando	Nooni
Ghomala	Mfumté	Shupamin
Akose	Fefe	

Most of the research have been in applied linguistics and oral literature. There is need to strengthen research in the domains of phonology and grammar.

About 40 languages have been influenced by research at the department. The publication of theses in languages have increased. The following list is exhaustive but indicative often related research institutions CABTAL, SIL, CERDOTOLA, and University Departments have had their own impact.

Language	2008	2019	Language	2008	2019
Mbo	13	16	Bafut	43	50
			Aghem	18	20
Ngombale	4	6	Yemba	55	70
Limbum	39	42	Ngiemboun	40	49
Mfumté	3	11	Ghomala	53	61
			Fe'efe	65	70
Nooni	17	18	Medumba	24	25
Mbembe	7	8	Ewondo	91	95
Ngwo			Awing	7	17
Tuti	17	18	Mankon	27	30
Oku	14	15	Akose	41	42
Ngwe	19	20	Shupamum	43	46
Mbum	20	21	Nd'Nda'a	15	17
	20	21			
Kom	47	60			
Nso'	76	80			



## Conclusion

While it is crucial to continue research on all the languages, it is crucial to save the endangered languages revitalization projects should be the focus-literary activities being the foremost. It will be necessary to make an update of the research status of all the languages. This will enable researchers to focus on the less developed languages and areas not exploited. Publications of each language should be available at least in the council of that locality for easy access and exploitation. The newly created society for languages and cultures of Cameroon can be at the forefront of this enterprise. We need to revise those research results, update them. In this wise, we will reach 2030 with a revived linguistic and cultural heritage ready for the realization of the sustainable development goals. This will be a spring board for the emergence in 2035.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- [1]. 2004, Dynamique des langues Camerounaises en contact avec le Français (approche macrosociolinguistique). Thèse de Doctorat d'Etat en linguistique, université de Yaoundé I, Yaoundé.
- [2]. Austin, P.K. & Sallabank, J. (eds) (2012). *The Cambridge handbook of endangered languages*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [3]. Austin, Peter, (ed) (2008) *1000 languages. The worldwide history of living and lost tongues*. Leiden, Thames & Hudson.
- [4]. Batibo, H.M (2005). *Language decline and death in Africa: causes, consequences and challenges*. Multilingual matters Clevedon Buffalo, Toronto: Mouton de Gruyter.
- [5]. Batibo, H.M (2009) "safe guarding endangered languages". In 2<sup>nd</sup> linguapax Afrika international conference, Addis Abba 3-4 March 2009.
- [6]. Bitjaa kody, Z.D. 2000. "Attitudes et représentations linguistiques à Yaoundé. In *African journal of Applied Linguistics*, N° 2, pp 100-124.
- [7]. Bradley, D & M. (2002) *language endangerment and language maintenance*, London and New-York; Rutledge Curzon.
- [8]. Brenzinger, M. (2007) *language endangerment throughout the world*. In Brenzinger (ed) *language diversity endangered* (pp. 9-13). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- [9]. Cahill, M (2003) "from Endangered to less Endangered: case Histories from Brazil and Papua New Guinea". In notes in *Sociolinguistics* N° 1.vol. 5.
- [10]. CERDOTOLA, 2008
- [11]. Djité, P. (2008a) *the sociolinguistics of development in Africa*. Multilingual matters.
- [12]. Clevedon.
- [13]. *Ethnologue*, 20<sup>e</sup> édition, 21 février 2017
- [14]. Fishman, J. A (2000). *Why is it hard to save a threatened language (ed), can threatened languages be saved? Reversing language shift, revisiting: A 21st century perspective*. Clevedon multilingual matters.
- [15]. Fishman, Joshua A, 1991. *Reversing Language Shift: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Language*. Multilingual matters.
- [16]. Grenoble L.A, L.J Whaley, 2006 *saving languages: an introduction to language revitalization*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- [17]. Grienvald, collette. (2007), "language endangerment in South America. A programmatic approach" In honour; A Grenoble and Landsang J. Whaley, Eds, 124—59.
- [18]. Groupe d'experts spécial de L'UNESCO sur les langues en danger 2003. « Language vitality and endangerment ». Disponible
- [19]. Le Clerc, J. 2003. "La vitalité des petites langues" in *Aménagement linguistique dans le monde*, <http://www.tlfq.ucaval.ca/axy/campus/vital-petites-langues.thtm>.
- [20]. LECLERC, J. 2003, « la mort des langues » in *Aménagement linguistique dans le monde*. <http://www.tlfq.ulaval.ca/axl/langues/vital-mortdeslangue.htm>.
- [21]. Lewis, Paul, M; ET Gary F. Simmons. 2010. « Assessing endangerment: Expanding Fishman's GIDS ». *Revue Romaine de Linguistique* 55 (2): 103-20.
- [22]. Mufwene, S.S and vigoraus, C.B (2008) *Globalization and language vitality, perspective from foreign language study*, London, continuum Press.
- [23]. Obiero, Ogone, JOHN (2010) from *Assessing language endangerment or vitality to creation and evaluating language Revitalization programmes*. *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 19 (4). 201-226.
- [24]. Skutnabb-kangas, T.Kivela, S and Olthuis, M (2013) *Revitalizing indigenous languages; how to recreate a lost generation language diversity and language rights*. Multilingual matters.
- [25]. TASAKU, T. 2005, *language endangerment and language revitalization*. Mouton de Gruyter, the pacific, London, routledge.
- [26]. Nforbi Emmanuel, (2019), *Didactics of Indigenous Knowledge in Africa*, EPH - International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, Volume-4 | Issue-2 | Feb 2019, ISSN: 2208-2174, Plot No. 15, Firozpur Jhirka, Haryana, India (122104)
- [27]. Emmanuel NFORBI, *African Languages and Applied Linguistics: from theory to practice in Cameroon*. EPH - International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, Volume-4 | Issue-4 | April 2019 ISSN: 2208-2174, Plot No. 15, Firozpur Jhirka, Haryana, India (122104)

- [28]. Emmanuel NFORBI, *THE LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL CHALLENGE IN AFRICA*. EPH - International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, Volume-4 | Issue-4 | April 2019, ISSN: 2208-2174, Plot No. 15, Firozpur Jhirka, Haryana, India (122104).
- [29]. Nforbi Emmanuel, Siéwoué Martin Bolivar, (2019), *Bilingualism, Testing and Curriculum Issues in English Language Education in Cameroon*. Laboratory of African Studies and the Diaspora, University of Dschang.
- [30]. Nforbi Emmanuel, (2019), *Multilingual Manual*, Laboratory of African Studies and the Diaspora, University of Dschang.
- [31]. Eberhard David M., Gary Simons and Charles D. Fleming. 2019. *Ethnologue Languages of the World*, 22 edition. Dallas, Texas
- [32]. Charles BINAM BIKOI ET al. 2012. *Linguistic Atlas of Cameroon-a Bibliography*. CERDOTOLA.

#### **APPENDIX SOME RESEARCH WORKS ON AFRICAN LANGUAGES FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF DSCHANG**

- Akem Shedmankah Helen (2009) *Awing structural grammar*. A description of the word and verb phrase (DEA) Dschang University.
- Pierre Nguesso, (2009); *Analyse de intégration phonologies ET sémantique de l'Anglais ET le Français dans le Yemba*. Dschang University.
- Ledoux Noël Jousse Fotio, (2000) *Les images de la femme dans les chansons féminines Ngiemboon*. Maitrise, Dschang University.
- Joseph Noutenjeu (2000) *Paroles de chansons du rite de veuvage chez les Yemba*, UD. Dschang University.
- Louise Angeline Ngamngne (2000) *Etude Lexico statique ET sociolinguistique du Fe'fe*.
- Makamthe Louise (2002) *Approche ethnolinguistique de l'anthroponyme gue Ngemba*. Dschang University.
- Agueguia Keumeze, (2017) *Enseignement des temps verbaux du Yemba en classe de 4em*. Approche expérimentation. Dschang University.
- Namdjou Marlise Carole (2017) *Les chansons populaires en langue Yemba. Contours discursifs ET en jeux didactiques*. Dschang University.
- Wako Rosine Suzanne (2017) *Formes Figées du Fe'efe'e- Catégorisation ET traduction vers l'Anglais ET le Français*. Dschang University.
- Nguetsa Nziwan Leufack Mathias (2005), *Production du matériel didactique pour l'alphabétisation des adultes en langue Yemba*. Maitrise. Dschang University.
- Hypolitte Tegoma (2007) *Les chants de naissance Yemba: Une étude thématique ET esthétique*.
- Akem Shedmankah Helen (2009) *Awing structural grammar* DEA Dschang University.
- Tchatchoung Navaron, MA UD (2013) *Approche Critique de l'Alphabétisation en Ghomala-jo*.
- Yonego Tachoum Rosine Emilie (2013) *De la Grammaire Descriptive a la Grammaire Pédagogique. Le cas des constructions verbal du Ghomala au secondaire*. MA. Dschang University.
- Nguemtchuem Mirabelle (2016) *Vers UN programme harmonisé d'alphabétisation en langue Shupamom*. MA. Dschang University.
- Nathalie Noel Tientcheu Tchameni (2008) *Esquisse phonologique du Kwa' (code ACCAM 990) ET Proposition d'une orthographe*. MA. Dschang University.
- Tomi Bamou Marcel (2018) *Alphabétisation non formelle au Cameroun. Enjeux ET perspective: Cas du Yemba et du Ghomala'*. MA. Dschang University.
- Frankline Labergere tchebeba Derjeugang (2015) *Vitalité Ethnolinguistique du la langue Kom*. MA. Dschang University.
- kain Godfrey Chuo (2017) *A Curriculum perspective of Mother-Tongue instructional Practices in Basic Education Cameroon: Case of Kom*. MA. Dschang University.
- François Feudjio (2018) *Le Tissage ET L'Alphabétisation fonctionnelle en Yemba*. MA. Dschang University.
- Nganah Niabelle Stephanie (2015) *Traduction de la déclaration Universelle des droit de l'homme en Yemba, pour une meilleure Diffusion de ceux-ci*. MA. Dschang University.
- Johnson Ngwang SULE (2018) *Functional Literacy in Limbum language through the Production of Barmboos Chairs and Mats in the Wumbum Land*. MA. Dschang University.
- Fongou Awomdem Grace Divine (2014) *Utilisation des langues Nationales en Procédures Judiciaires: Cas du Shupamum*. MA. Dschang University.
- Delphine Robette Ngomne TENE (2008) *Le rôle des langues Nationales dans la vulgarisation Agricole: Cas du SHUPAMUM*. MA. Dschang University.
- Evariste Fokou (2012) *Proposition d'une Grammaire Pédagogique du Ngiemböön: Le cas des constructions Nominales dans les classes de 4em et 3em*. Dschang University.
- Ngopog Temejie Idriss (2016) *Ngombale: Une langue, Deux systèmes orthographiques*. MA. Dschang University.
- Numfor Thaddeus Tanifum (2015) *Probing Current Translation and Interpretation activities in Bafut*. Dschang University.
- Makougang Rachel (2017) *Anthroponymie chez les Mbo: analyse morpho-syntaxicosémantiques*. Dschang University.
- Fongang Donald Séraphin (2017) *Les formes d'adresse ET les stratégies de politesse chez les Fe'efe'e ET les Yemba*. MA. Dschang University.
- Nkepte Njonwo Alida (2017) *Les langues Camerounaises comme outils de vulgarisation scientifique ET Technique: le lexique e du Nda'Nda' au service des petits élevages*. MA.

Dschang University.

Ngeasang Astude Flore (2017) Les Defis de l'acquisition de la langue Ngwe en Milieu urbain: cas de la ville du Bafuossam. MA. Dschang University.

Tadjuidjé kenmogne (2017) Proposition d'une grammaire pédagogique du Nda'Nda': cas de la construction nominale du Bangou (ηjiép). MA. Dschang University.

Djournene Kuete (2017) Terminologie ET numérisation des danses Patrimoniales Ngiemboon: cas du ziq. MA. Dschang University.

Nguezeng Kenfack (2017) Etudes comparative de l'interrogation en Yemba ET en Ghomala. MA. Dschang University.

Tsamayem meli Marley (2017) Les chansons de consécration des Jumeaux chez les Ngiembθθn. MA. Dschang University.

Tiwa Thierry Verdin (2017) Etudes comparative de la syntaxe des numéraux des langues Ngiemboom ET Kom. MA. Dschang University.

Tindo Choffor Suzie, Danielle (2017) Etudes comparative des constructions nominales du Ngiemboom ET du Yemba: perspective d'accroissement de l'intercompréhension en classe de 4eme. MA. Dschang University.

Lekemdjiu Demessé (2018) Les incantations des guérisseurs traditionnels Yemba: techniques de persuasion des écrites sur naturelles. MA. Dschang University.

Tchinda Meli Merline (2018) Problématique des traductions de discours rituel Ngiemboom vers le Français. MA. Dschang University.

Yemaneli Seraphine (2016) Les Défis des traductions des objectifs de développement durable en langue Africaines: cas du Ngiembθθn. MA, Dschang University.

Nji Leslie Kum (2018) Verb morphology of the Fang language in the North West Region of Cameroon. MA Dschang University.

Fokam Mba Cresience Rosine (2015) Les chansons nuptiales chez les Fulbé. MA Dschang Université.

Mbuh Christabel (2018) Vitalité ethnolinguistique de la langue Medumba en contexte semiurbain: cas de la ville de Bangangté. MA, Dschang University.

Sonkouat Megono Idriss (2018) Le rôle de l'Alphabétisation Ecrite dans la Protection de l'environnement aux seins de la communauté Ngombale. MA, Dschang University.

Djuidjé Noubissi Diane Gwladys (2018) Vitalité ethnolinguistique du Yemba. MA Dschang University.

Pepiezep Désiré Noel (2017) La morphologie nominale du Mengaka. MA Dschang University.

Mende Poufoung Annie Josiane (2018) the verb morphology of Mengaka. MA Dschang University.

Fouodji Koutio (2018) Standardisation ET pratique de l'écriture de la langue Ngiemboom. MA Dschang University.

Maxime Mercier (2018) A Sociolinguistic analysis of the use of proverbs within the Yemba language. MA, Dschang University.

Benis Nyensi (2017) Aspects of phonology of upper class Nooni. MA Dschang University.

Dongmo, Gladice (2017) Procédés de formations des noms en Ngiemboom. MA, Dschang Université.

Mbimeh Paul (2013) an improved didactic and pedagogic approach to Mother-Tongue Literacy in Cameroon: The case of a wing. MA Dschang University.

Noubsisie Florence (2017) La dévitalisations du Bafaw-Balong. Analyse ET perspectives de revitalisation dans la ville de Mbanga. MA Dschang University.

Sonkonat Megouo Idriss (2017) La contributions de la langue Ngombale dans la protection de l'environnement. MA Dschang University.

Tchatchonang Fotsi Jidith (2017) Vulgarisation de la culture Ghomala à l'ere de la Mondialisation: Etude pragmatico-sémiologiques de quelques Chansons de Karyce Fotso. MA Dschang University.

Agnomia Assonkooh (2017) Vers une Revalorisation de la langue Mboo. Le cas de la construction nominale dans des classes de 4 eme et 3 eme. MA Dschang University.

Belinga Eric Jaurès (2017) Les langues locales ET le développement-durable au Cameroun. La contribution de l'Ewondo dans la Haute-Sanaga. MA Dschang University.

Fru Clovis Tse (2017) A Comparative Appraisal of the use of the Mother-Tongue in Urban and Rural areas of Mankon by the youth. MA Dschang University.

Donfack Gnintedem Fabrice (2018) Promotion de la langue Yemba pas l'internet: Etat des lieux ET perspectives. MA, Dschang University.

Demson Bethen (2012) Morphologie verbale du Bakoko. Dschang.

Nforbi, Emmanuel & Ngum, Peter (2009) Oku Grammar. Dschang University Press