

Ideological and Basic Design Dimensions of the Cameroon Nursery and Primary School Curriculum

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I. Introduction

Education is a deliberate pursuit that focuses on achieving specific results, typically articulated at several levels. Therefore, it is essential that the curriculum at all educational levels accurately aligns with the fundamental educational principles embraced by the community, whether by direct statement or indirect inference. It is imperative that it aligns with this idea and actively contributes to its achievement. The basic education sector in Cameroon has been forced to update the primary school curriculum due to a gloomy economic situation, significant population growth, particularly among young people, and rapid advancements in science and technology on the global stage. This is in line with the country's goal of becoming an emerging nation by 2035.

In accordance with the country's 2035 development vision, schools are expected to undergo a significant transformation in their roles. They will continue to be responsible for cultivating citizens, promoting individuality, fostering economic understanding, encouraging collective responsibility, instilling moral values, enhancing intellectual ability, and promoting political and civic understanding. In response to this situation, the several ministries responsible for education promptly convened to develop measures to address these emerging developments. In February 2005, the Ministries responsible for the education sector in Cameroon (MINEDUB, MINESEC, MINESUP, MINEFOP) developed a Sector Wide Approach that embodies a shared and consistent vision for education.

The Fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG4), which focuses on quality education, aims to guarantee accessible and fair education of high standards. This goal, as stated by UNESCO (2017b), starts with providing fundamental education. The curriculum at this level should account for the individual variations in learners' personalities, talents, attitudes, and interests that they bring to the classroom. The Ministry of Basic Education is dedicated to fostering an education system that ensures young graduates are socially integrated, bilingual, and competent in a field crucial to the country's development. This is because basic education plays a vital role in shaping learners and fostering their dynamism and creativity (MINEDUC, 2022). Each child have inherent learning capabilities that must be stimulated and directed through suitable teaching and educational resources. As a result, the Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB) implemented a comprehensive overhaul of the Nursery and Primary school curricula. This initiative is designed to guarantee high-quality basic education for every child in Cameroon. Thus, it is crucial to analyse the key elements of this curriculum and ensure they are in line with the fundamental components or aspects of curriculum organisation.

II. The Cameroon Education System

The education system in Cameroon is comprised of two distinct subsystems: The English subsystem and the French subsystem. Pre-primary education refers to the initial stage of formal instruction, lasting for a period of two years. Both subsystems of primary education have a duration of 6 years. Secondary education is categorised into two tracks: Secondary general and technical. Students have the option to select between these two distinct paths. The combined period of general education for both subsystems is 7 years. One of the main concerns of the Cameroon Education policy is to harmonize both systems in terms of the program and structure (Yaro, 2021). However, the composition of the English and French sub-sub systems still differs. The structure of higher education in Cameroon follows the LMD system. The Education and Training Sector is overseen by multiple ministries, each with specific responsibilities:

- a) The Ministry of Basic Education is responsible for Pre-school Education, Primary Education, and Literacy.
- b) The Ministry of Secondary Education oversees General Secondary Education, Technical and Professional Secondary Education, and Training Education.
- c) The Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training is in charge of vocational training.
- d) The Ministry of Higher Education is responsible for post-secondary studies.
- e) The Ministry of Youth and Civic Education focuses on the civic and moral education of youth.

In addition to these five ministries, there are other ministries that also play a role in the education and oversight of young people and adults. These include the Ministry of Sports and Physical Education, Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and the Ministry of Public Health, among others. The execution of the tasks related to the training and education of citizens occurs within the framework of structured training cycles as described below:

Preschool Cycle: Typically, the Cameroonian nursery school is an early elementary educational institution that spans a duration of two years. It accepts children who are 4 years old in their first year and 5 years old in their second year. The State has made a commitment in the DSSEF 2013-2020 to the development of community preschools. This dedication is evident in the endorsement of the National Policy Document on Preschool Development and the Strategy for the Implementation of Community-based Preschool. Since the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year, the government has begun establishing Community Preschool Centres (CPC) in rural areas.

Primary Cycle: Primary education consists of three levels, each lasting two years.

Level 1 consists of the Section d'Initiation au Langage (SIL) /Class 1 and the Cours Préparatoire (CP)/Class 2; • Level 2 includes the Cours Élémentaire Première Année (CE1)/Class 3 and the Cours Élémentaire Deuxième Année (CE2)/class 4; • Level 3 is composed of the Cours Moyen Première Année (CM1)/Class 5 and the Cours Moyen Deuxième Année (CM2)/Class 6.

The conclusion of the elementary education cycle is distinguished by the Certificat d'Etudes Primaires (CEP) in the French-speaking sub-system and the First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) in the English-speaking sub-system. The duration of primary education in both subsystems is six (6) years. Promotion within the same level is permitted collectively, in conformity with the current regulations. Nevertheless, the act of a student repeating a grade may be granted under certain circumstances upon the request of the parent in question (as stated in Order No. 315/B1/1464/MINEDUB dated February 21, 2006).

Every school is governed by the School Council, led by the council president, and the school management, led by a Head Teacher. At every level, there is a facilitator who organises the educational activities. The elementary schools in a sub division are supervised by a Sub divisional Inspector of Basic Education (IAEB), who carries out administrative and pedagogical duties. A cluster of neighbouring schools forms a pedagogical hub, serving as a meeting location for teachers during Pedagogical Animation Units (UNAPED and UNAMAT) and Pedagogical Days. The "Practicing Schools" are attached to the "Government Teacher Training Colleges" and are under the jurisdiction of the Divisional Delegate of Basic Education.

Literacy and Non-Formal Basic Education (LNFBE): Approximately 27% of children fail to finish primary education, resulting in a lack of fundamental skills needed for long-lasting and permanent literacy. Consequently, the need for LNFBE (Lifelong Non-Formal Basic Education) tends to rise, driven by causes such as social marginalisation, the isolation of specific regions, the resurgence of illiteracy, poverty, and other negative consequences of the economic crisis. The public authorities have recognised the significance of LNFBE and are actively striving to utilise it as a catalyst for development, aiming to achieve Cameroon's economic and social advancement by 2035 while adhering to their obligations to the international community.

Literacy and Non-Formal Basic Education are alternate options for education and training in the non-formal sector. reading encompasses endeavours focused on acquiring reading and numeracy skills, as well as fostering life skills and income-generating activities (IGAs). Non-Formal Basic Education is designed to cater to school-age children who have either never attended school or have dropped out early. Its purpose is to provide them with the opportunity to resume their education, pursue vocational training in a specific subject, or enhance their skills if they show ability.

Adult literacy activities occur within the Functional Literacy Centres (FLCs), while those pertaining to Non-Formal Basic Education for children who are not attending school are conducted in the Non-Formal Basic Education Centres (NFBECS).

The secondary cycle of education has a duration of seven (7) years in both the Francophone and Anglophone sub-systems. The educational system is organised into two branches: Technical and Vocational Secondary Education and General Secondary Education. In the Anglophone sub-system, the initial phase spans a duration of five (5) years and is validated by the General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level (GCE OL) diploma. The subsequent phase, lasting two (2) years, is validated by the General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (GCE AL). The initial phase of the Francophone sub-system of General Secondary Education and Technical Secondary Education has a duration of 4 years. The Brevet d'Etudes du Premier Cycle (BEPC) and the Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle (CAP) both authorise it.

The second phase in each of these educational systems spans a duration of 3 years and is officially recognised by the Baccalaureat diploma. In 2016/2017, the Government established Technical Agricultural High Schools in Maroua and Yabassi as part of its dedication to enhancing the professionalism of education. The duration of teacher education ranges from 1 to 3 years, depending on the entry diploma. This education is provided in the GTTCs and GTTTCs, where general and technical education teachers are respectively trained. The CAPIEMP or CAPIET diploma grants official approval. Higher education refers to the educational institutions, such as universities and other advanced institutions, that offer specialised training to young individuals who have completed their Baccalaureat or an equivalent certificate in the French-speaking sub-system, or the General Certificate of Education GCE (Advance Level) in the English-speaking sub-system. The implementation of the LMD (Licence-Masters-Doctorat) system and a dedicated focus on enhancing the professionalism of teaching have been the result of recent reforms. The implementation of the LMD system in universities began effectively after the announcement made by the CEMAC Heads of State in 2007.

The objectives of the LMD system in Cameroon are to contribute to the growth of the national economy and promote graduate employment, to train a new generation of executives with a strong civic education and the ability to address the challenges of sustainable development at the national and Central African sub-regional levels, and to promote research training as a means of supporting development in partnership with socio-professional circles. The BTS/HND/DUT/DSEP programme covers the first two years of study, whereas the Licence programme is awarded upon completion of the academic course in the third year of study in a faculty. The Master's degree programme, with a duration of two years, equips students with the necessary skills and knowledge to conduct in-depth research, either in theoretical or practical aspects, pertaining to their specific area of expertise. It serves as a replacement for the Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies (DEA) in the previous system.

A doctorate is conferred upon completion of a minimum of three years of research, together with the successful defence of a doctoral or PhD thesis. Vocational Training: The vocational training centres are responsible for carrying out the Government's policies for employment, training, and professional integration. Presently, the labour force situation in Cameroon is marked by a substantial increase in the number of individuals of working age, a robust and early need for employment, and a limited level of skills among the active population. One consequence is the limited availability of chances in areas that have a high potential for adding value, together with a lack of alignment between training and the dynamics of the labour market. The purpose of vocational training is to facilitate the successful integration of individuals who are transitioning out of the education system into the workforce, thereby helping to manage the movement of people. The SAR/SM and Trade Training Centres are encompassed within it. The duration of the training programme ranges from 6 to 24 months, depending on the initial proficiency level of the applicants.

III. Major Orientation of Curriculum Work

Curriculum writers exhibit a wide range of divergent perspectives, methodologies, orientations, or ideologies when it comes to their work on curriculum. Some have referred to them as major orientation of curriculum work (Miller & Seller, 1990), others as meta-orientation (Schobert, 1986, and Ornstein and Hunkins, 2009) while some as Curriculum Ideologies (Schiro, 2013).

Schubert (1986) categorised the three primary orientations as follows: (1) Intellectual Traditionalists, (2) Experientialists, and (3) Social Behaviourists (pp. 13-18). According to him, intellectual traditionalists prioritise the subject matter that needs to be conveyed to learners, experientialists prioritise the learners' personal experiences and cater to their requirements, while social behaviourists prioritise the society and its needs. In a similar vein, Miller and Seller (1990) categorised the various orientations into three primary ones: (1) the Transmission Orientation, (2) the Transaction Orientation, and (3) the Transformative Orientation.

According to Miller and Seller (1990), they are referred to as the primary focus of curriculum development. Transmission orientation is characterised by the perception of the learner as passive and the teacher as a taskmaster, as stated by them. The educational approach places a strong emphasis on memorization, traditional teaching methods, and instruction that revolves around the teacher. It views the learning process as the transfer of factual information, concepts, rules, and cultural norms. In the transaction orientation, the student is regarded as an engaged and logical participant, and the educational process emphasises problem-solving and exploration.

Knowledge acquisition and skill development occur through active discourse between learners, educational resources, peers, and the teacher, who assumes the role of a facilitator or moderator. The transformation orientation focuses on instructing learners in skills and information that facilitate personal and social development. It enhances societal consciousness and enables learners to actively engage in society and beyond the mindset of solely pursuing their own interests. The curriculum aims to incorporate both the internal and external aspects of learning, foster learners' understanding of their connections with the world around them, and encourage self-fulfillment, multidisciplinary engagement, and community participation.

Schiro (2013) classifies them as curriculum ideologies, dividing them into four distinct categories: The ideologies encompassed in this list are Social Efficiency, Scholar Academic, Learner Centred, and Social Reconstruction. According to Scholar Academics, our culture has valuable knowledge that has been systematically organised into several academic disciplines. The primary objective of education is to facilitate the acquisition of the collective wisdom and knowledge of our society, particularly in the academic domains. Gaining comprehension of an academic discipline entails acquiring knowledge of its subject matter, conceptual frameworks, and cognitive processes.

Teachers should possess a profound comprehension of their field of study and be capable of effectively and accurately conveying it to students. Social Efficiency supporters assert that the primary objective of education is to effectively fulfil the requirements of society by equipping young individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to become productive and responsible members of the community in the future. Their objective is to educate young individuals in the competencies and protocols necessary for both professional and domestic settings, enabling them to lead fruitful lives and sustain the proper functioning of society. Advocates of a learner-centered approach prioritise the specific needs and concerns of each individual. They advocate for schools to be pleasurable environments where individuals can organically develop in accordance with their inherent characteristics. The objective of education is to foster the development of individuals, each in alignment with their distinctive intellectual, social, emotional, and physical characteristics. Social Reconstructionists are aware of the societal issues and the injustices inflicted against its members, including those stemming from racial, gender, social, and economic disparities. The assumption is made that the aim of education is to promote the establishment of a novel and equitable society that provides utmost contentment to all its constituents.

Basic Design Dimension Considerations of the Curriculum The curriculum design process commences once decisions regarding the selection and use of various orientations have been made in curricular works. According to Ornstein & Hunkins (2014), in order to create a curriculum, it is important to take into account the

interconnectedness of its components. Typically, this is achieved by utilising two fundamental dimensions: horizontal and vertical dimensions, coupled with other related components, such as the Tyler 1946 reasoning, as illustrated in figure 1 below:

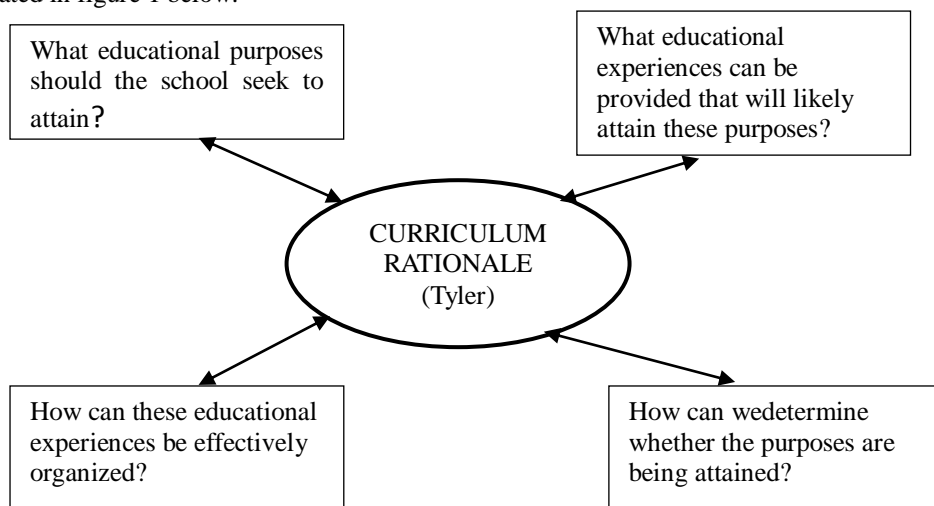


Figure 1: Tyler 1946 rationale

The aspect of curriculum organization that describe the correlation or integration of content taught concurrently is known as horizontal organization. It focuses on the principles of scope and integration. This refers to the arranging of curriculum elements in a side-by-side manner. Vertical organisation refers to the arrangement of content in a sequential manner. The focus of this is around the principles of sequence and continuity. That is, it focuses on the longitudinal arrangement of curriculum components. Hence, while contemplating design, curricularists must examine it from various perspectives, including scope, integration, sequencing, articulation, balance, and continuity.

Scope: When contemplating curriculum design, educators must address the comprehensive and profound nature of its content. Scope refers to the comprehensive extent of content offered to students, encompassing various educational experiences such as cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and spiritual, which are designed to actively include students in their learning process.

Tambo (2012) examines the concept of scope from two perspectives: macro and micro. At the macro level, scope refers to the complete range of subjects that make up the curriculum. This encompasses the entirety of the programme. At the micro level, the term "scope" refers to the specific content covered in a course or syllabus. These include the goal, content areas, educational activities, instructional resources, instructional approaches, and evaluation systems. The challenge of determining scope goes back to the basic question posed by Herbert Spencer, "What knowledge is of the most worth?"

Combining or merging different parts or elements into a unified whole. Integration encompasses the process of connecting and combining various forms of information and experiences found within the curricular design (Thanavathi, 2019). The design characteristic aims to establish a close relationship between different components of the curriculum, allowing students to perceive information as a united whole rather than separate parts. Integration involves establishing connections between the scope of one subject or syllabus and that of another subject or syllabus. This includes aligning objectives, subject matter themes, learning experiences, and other related elements. Additionally, it can indicate the merging or correlation of linked disciplines into a single subject, commonly known as a broad field, as mentioned by Tambo (2012).

Sequence refers to the specific order in which the content of the syllabus will be presented or studied (Tambo, 2012). When examining sequence, curricularists have the task of properly managing curricular aspects to ensure that the curriculum promotes cumulative and uninterrupted learning, often known as the vertical relationship between curricular topics. Curricularists are responsible for determining the sequencing and repetition of content and events in order to provide students with opportunity to make connections and enhance their comprehension

of the curriculum, as stated by Thanavathi (2019). Sequence underscores the significance of each subsequent experience building upon the previous one, while also delving more extensively and profoundly into the issue at hand. It involves more than simply repeating a skill or notion, but rather, it involves a process of growing understanding and knowledge, where each subsequent encounter builds upon the previous one. There are several sequence patterns that should be observed, including the following: progression from simple to complex, proximity from near to far, learning from parts to wholes or from wholes to parts, teacher preferences, learners' interests, and chronological learning.

Continuity refers to the vertical repetition or reiteration of essential educational components. Essentially, the important ideas, concepts, principles, and skills are repeatedly presented at higher degrees of complexity and comprehensive understanding. For instance, if the purpose emphasises the importance of reading and writing skills, it is crucial to ensure that there are frequent and ongoing opportunities for practicing and enhancing these skills. Articulation is the term used to describe the interconnectedness of different components within the curriculum. The relationship might be either perpendicular or parallel. Vertical articulation refers to the concept that each succeeding piece of content is constructed based on the content that came before it. The primary purpose of addressing vertical articulation is to ensure that students acquire the foundational knowledge necessary for understanding and engaging with subsequent content in the curriculum. Horizontal articulation refers to the simultaneous occurrence and connection between parts. That is, establishing connections between the components of one subject and those of another.

Balance: When developing a curriculum, educators also prioritise ensuring that each part of the design is given appropriate emphasis to prevent any distortions. Balance, in the context of design, pertains to the allocation of weight to different aspects of the design. The challenge is in achieving equilibrium as we endeavour to tailor and personalise the curriculum's content and experiences, while also accommodating a traditional approach that designs curriculum for a large audience. Educational policies exert a significant influence. Maintaining a balanced curriculum necessitates ongoing adjustments to the curriculum.

Overview of the Cameroon Primary School Curriculum The primary school curriculum in Cameroon is structured around the desired outcomes for students at the end of primary school, the different areas of study, the skills to be developed, the integrated learning themes, the teaching methods, assessment strategies, weighting, and the time allocated to each subject.

The Learner's Profile. The competencies that learners are supposed to achieve upon completing primary school are referred to as the national core skills. The learner is anticipated to have developed fundamental abilities at the national level in order to transition into secondary school or participate in other learning environments or activities. Moreover, the student must possess essential qualities in all five domains and demonstrate a keen desire in learning all subjects. By the conclusion of both nursery and primary education, students should have acquired seven National Core Skills. The following items are included:

- a) Effective communication in both official languages (English and French) and the utilisation of at least one national language. This indicates the proficiency to utilise the four language abilities of these languages. Specifically, the learner should possess the ability to comprehend auditory information, engage in spoken communication, and demonstrate proficiency in reading and writing.
- b) Application of fundamental concepts in Mathematics, Science, and Technology. This entails the process of obtaining information, skills, and attitudes in these specific fields and the capability to apply them to tackle issues in practical scenarios.
- c) Implementation of Social and Citizenship Values (including principles of morality, good governance, and fiscal transparency). This entails instilling patriotic, moral, citizenship, and good governance principles in learners from both cycles, in order to equip them for a seamless integration into society.
- d) Exhibition of the Spirit of Autonomy, a Sense of Initiative, Creativity, and Entrepreneurship. To cultivate this proficiency in the learner, it is necessary to gather a diverse range of knowledge and skills from other disciplines. This will aid in the development of the learner's social integration abilities, creativity, as well as their managerial and entrepreneurial capabilities.

- e) Utilisation of fundamental concepts and tools in Information and Communication Technology. This necessitates the prudent and conscientious utilisation of information and communication technology tools both in educational institutions and in the broader community.
- f) Implementation of Lifelong Learning. This suggests that the learner will show a strong motivation and determination to pursue and maintain their education. They will also be able to effectively manage their time and information, both on their own and in a group setting.
- g) Engagement in Physical, Sports, and Artistic Activities. This platform offers learners the opportunity to enhance their physical, psycho-motor, artistic, personal, and interpersonal abilities, while also promoting their overall well-being. Comprehensive Skills.

The Cameroon National Core Skills Framework consists of four comprehensive skills, which are as follows:

- 1) Intellectual capabilities encompass the ability to effectively utilise information, resolve complex problems, develop logical reasoning and keen observation skills, employ critical judgement, and engage in creative and inventive thinking.
- 2) Methodological competence refers to the ability to effectively utilise working methods, leverage information and communication technology, organise one's own learning, and cultivate a strong desire to study in each subject.
- 3) Personal and interpersonal competences refer to the skills and qualities that allow an individual to develop their personality, gain abilities that contribute to their socio-cultural integration and personal fulfilment, and effectively collaborate with others.
- 4) Communication competences refer to the ability of the learner to effectively communicate in both official languages and at least one national language.

Domains, Weighting, Competences and Subjects

Table 1 shows the domains and their weightings. The competences from the National Core Skills that each domain develops are indicated and the subjects that are needed to develop these competences.

Table 1: Domains, Weighting, Competences to be Developed and Related Subjects

S/N	Domain/Weighting	Competences to be Developed	Subjects
1	Basic knowledge (60%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication in the two official languages (English and French) and the use of at least one national language ▪ Use of basic notions in Mathematics, Science and Technology ▪ Practice of lifelong learning ▪ The four broad-based competences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ English Language ▪ Mathematics ▪ Science and Technology ▪ French
2	Communal life and national integration (5%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice of social and citizenship values (Morality, good governance and budgetary transparency) ▪ Practice of lifelong learning ▪ The four broad-based competences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social studies
3	Vocational and life skills (20%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstration of the spirit of autonomy, a sense of initiative, creativity, and entrepreneurship ▪ Practice of physical, sports and artistic activities ▪ Practice of lifelong learning ▪ The four broad-based competences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vocational Studies ▪ Arts ▪ Physical Education and Sports
4	Cultural identity (5%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice of lifelong learning ▪ The four broad-based competences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Languages and Cultures
5	Digital Literacy (10%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use basic Information and Communication Technology concepts and tools ▪ Practice of lifelong learning - The four broad-based competences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

The curriculum is learner-centric and focuses on developing the necessary abilities to address the issues of modern-day Cameroon and the global community. The syllabuses are categorised into three levels: Level 1 (comprising class 1 and 2), Level 2 (comprising class 3 and 4), and Level 3 (comprising class 5 and 6). A total of ten disciplines have been identified from the five domains, which include English Language, Mathematics, Science and Technology, French, Social Studies, Vocational Studies, Arts, Physical Education and Sports, National Languages and Cultures, and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

Integrated Learning Themes (ILTs)

In order to make learning relevant to daily life, eight integrated learning themes have been identified to develop skills necessary in the harmonious integration of learners in their environment. The ILT for primary school cycle are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Integrated Learning Themes

Level I	Level II	Level III
- The home	- The home	- Nature
- The village/town	- The village/town	- The village/town
- The school	- The school	- The school
- Occupations	- Occupations	- Occupations
- Travelling	- Travelling	- Travelling
- Health	- Health	- Health
- Games	- Games	- Sports and leisure
- Communication	- Communication	- The universe and space

Integrated learning themes are essential components of project-based learning. They enhance the learning-teaching process and illuminate the core principles of PBL. The approach involves incorporating previously defined themes to enhance the teaching and learning experience in the Primary School. These topics will form the foundation for contextualising the notions of the subjects. Integrated learning themes serve as the fundamental basis for all activities that are planned to occur throughout a specific period of time within the school year. This can be accomplished for a duration of several weeks, months, or even longer, and it directly influences the effectiveness of project-based learning. An integrated approach combines all topics and provides learners with opportunity to enhance their learning through diverse information. As a result, children will acquire a more profound comprehension of the subject matter within their immediate surroundings. This approach enables learners to investigate, collect, analyse, refine, and display knowledge.

Additionally, it enables learners to actively participate in meaningful and applicable learning experiences. Students are anticipated to recognise the interrelatedness among different parts of the curriculum. The approach focuses on fostering skill development centred on a specific theme that is pertinent to the students in the class. Educational methodologies the education system in Cameroon has undergone pedagogical advancements, transitioning from the Objective-based Approach (OBA) to the Inferential Thinking Approach, also known as the "New Pedagogic Approach," and finally to the Competence-based Approach (CBA) or the Behavioural Objective-based Approach, which is currently implemented. The CBA promotes skill development through the implementation of Project Based Learning, Cooperative Learning, and Integrated Theme Learning.

Assessment is a crucial component of the teaching and learning process in Primary School and is a part of the curriculum. Assessment serves as a method of providing unbiased information to parents, guardians, and policy makers regarding the academic achievement of students in school. Various methodologies should be employed to gather data about the learner in order to facilitate and enhance the likelihood of learners benefiting from each other's knowledge. However, it is essential to assess learners in a just manner while also acknowledging that each learner has their own unique learning patterns. As a result, not all learners will consistently achieve the desired learning outcome at the same level.

Assessment in elementary schools in Cameroon encompasses three modalities: oral, written, and practical. There are numerous methods by which data might be collected on a learner's advancement. Various methods can be employed to assess learners, including observation checklists, learner self-assessment, daily practical

assignments, samples of learner's work, active participation and contribution in projects and conferencing, oral and written quizzes, portfolios, and willingness to engage in class and school activities. It is important to note that both formative and summative assessment should examine the information, abilities, and attitudes mentioned in the "Expected Learning Outcomes" column for each subject. Assessment should include diagnostic assessment, which helps identify areas of weakness or need for improvement, formative assessment, which provides ongoing feedback to guide learning, and summative assessment, which evaluates overall performance at the end of a period of instruction.

IV. Discussion

The discussion on this subject has been conducted in two aspects: one focusing on curricular ideology and the other on the fundamental feature of curriculum organisation.

The discussion on the ideological foundations of this curriculum is conducted in accordance with Miller and Seller's (1990) primary approach to curriculum development. This approach is not considered the greatest, but its components are clearly evident in this curriculum, as stated by the researcher. Nevertheless, while the ideological aspects of other authors may be apparent, they have not been adequately addressed in the context of this work. The following table provides a concise overview of the various curriculum domains and their corresponding ideological representations.

Table 3
Curriculum domains and their ideological representations.

Curriculum Domain		Example of Ideological Evidence	Dominant Curriculum Ideology/orientation
National Core Skills	Communication in the two official languages (English and French) and the use of at least one national language.	The ability to use the four language skills of these languages. That is, the learner should be able to listen, communicate orally, and be able to read and to write.	- Transmission - Transformation
	Use of basic notions in Mathematics, Science and Technology.	The acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes in these subject areas and the ability to use them to address challenges in real life situations.	- Transaction - Transformation
	Practice of Social and Citizenship Values (morality, good governance and budgetary transparency).	Inculcating patriotic, moral, citizenship and values of good governance in the learners of both cycles so as to prepare them for a harmonious insertion into the society.	- Transformation
	Demonstration of the Spirit of Autonomy, a Sense of Initiative, Creativity, and Entrepreneurship	This calls for the assembling of multidisciplinary knowledge and skills in view of developing the learners' social integration skills, creativity as well as managerial and entrepreneurial potentials.	- Transaction - Transformation
	Use of Basic Information and Communication Technology Concepts and Tools.	This requires the healthy, safe and responsible use of information and communication technology tools in school and in society.	- Transaction - Transformation
	Practice of Lifelong Learning	This implies that the learner will demonstrate the desire and will to undertake and continue education, organize self, especially through efficient time and information	- Transformation

	Practice of Physical, Sports and Artistic Activities.	management, individually or in groups. This provides learners with a platform to develop their physical, psychomotor, artistic, personal and interpersonal skills as well as improve their well-being.	- Transaction - Transformation
Broad-Based Competences	Intellectual competences	Exploiting information, solving problems, acquiring logical thinking and a sense of observation, exercising critical judgement, practicing creative and innovative thinking.	- Transmission - Transaction - Transformation
	Methodological competence	Giving oneself efficient working methods, exploiting information and communication technologies, organizing one's learning, and arousing the desire to learn each subject.	
	Personal and interpersonal competences	Enable the learner to develop his/her personality, acquire abilities in view of his/her socio-cultural integration and individual fulfilment, and cooperate with others.	
	Communication competences	Enable the learner to communicate in an appropriate manner in the two official languages and communicate in at least one national language.	
Basic Domains	Basic knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication in the two official languages (English and French) and the use of at least one national language ▪ Use of basic notions in Mathematics, Science and Technology ▪ Practice of lifelong learning ▪ The four broad-based competences 	- Transmission - Transaction - Transformation
	Communal life and national integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice of social and citizenship values (Morality, good governance and budgetary transparency) ▪ Practice of lifelong learning ▪ The four broad-based competences 	- Transaction - Transformation
	Vocational and life skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstration of the spirit of autonomy, a sense of initiative, creativity, and entrepreneurship ▪ Practice of physical, sports and artistic activities ▪ Practice of lifelong learning ▪ The four broad-based competences 	- Transaction - Transformation
	Cultural identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice of lifelong learning ▪ The four broad-based competences 	- Transmission - Transformation
	Digital Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use basic Information and Communication Technology concepts and tools ▪ Practice of lifelong learning - The four broad-based competences 	- Transaction - Transformation
Pedagogic Approaches	Competency-based approach (CBA) with major ones being Project based learning	The CBA facilitates the development of skills through the practice of Project Based Learning, Cooperative Learning and Integrated Theme	- Transaction - Transformation

	and cooperative learning	Learning	
Assessment	oral, written, practical	This can be done through: observation checklists; learner’s self-assessment; daily practical assignments; samples of learner’s work; learner’s willingness to participate and contribute in projects/conferencing; oral and written quizzes; portfolios; willingness to be involved in class and school activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transaction - Transmission - Transformation

Ideological considerations play a significant role in the process of curriculum development. There is no single ideology that is superior in establishing the components of a curriculum. However, the influence of the curriculum designers, as well as the contextual and global realities, might cause certain ideologies to dominate in a certain curriculum. Given that the Cameroon primary school curriculum is competency-based, it is clear that the transactional and transformational ideologies should play a dominant role in making decisions about the main components of the curriculum. Nevertheless, this does not advocate for stringent constraints on these two philosophies. The curriculum aims, content, learning experiences, and procedures are primarily influenced by the transmission orientation, and it is important to take this into consideration. When designing the curriculum and making decisions about what to teach, it is crucial for the curriculum designers and educational leaders to consider different ideologies. They should aim for a balanced approach that allows for a variety of curriculum content and learning experiences that promote conceptual, procedural, and technical knowledge.

The following discussion presents an analysis of the Cameroon primary school curriculum, focusing on its scope, integration, sequencing, articulation, balance, and continuity.

The accompanying paragraphs discuss each main component of curricular organisation in response to its basic dimension. The Cameroon primary school curriculum encompasses five areas and their respective weights: Basic knowledge (60%), communal life and national integration (5%), vocational and life skills (20%), cultural identity (5%), and digital literacy (10%). Every domain possesses significant core competencies that need to be developed, as well as pathway subjects that can further strengthen these competencies. This aligns with the fundamental abilities and comprehensive skills specified for this curriculum at the national level. The allocation of weighting to these domains (and associated disciplines) is not uniform, indicating that designers have prioritised certain portions of the curriculum content above others. Curriculum development is commonly impacted by various variables, including ideology, national goals and educational laws, as well as global needs. However, in a developing country such as Cameroon, while it is crucial for learners to have a solid foundation of fundamental knowledge, it is also necessary for them to possess the capacity to address social challenges, acquire skills that enhance their employability, and fulfil the requirements of globalisation. Greater emphasis should be focused on digital literacy, occupational and life skills, as well as cultural understanding.

Sequence, also known as the vertical arrangement of content (Ehsan, 1997) and the sequence in which knowledge is provided to learners (Print, 1993), is a prominent principle in the primary school curriculum. The curriculum carefully adheres to concepts of sequence, including simplicity to complexity, prerequisite learning, whole to part, and chronology. These four concepts have gained growing acceptance as the criteria for sequencing contents. Adhering to the principle of spiral sequencing, which is rooted in Bruner's (1960) learning theory, this curriculum excels in its approach of revisiting key concepts/topics/subjects multiple times to enhance their development. It is noteworthy that the curriculum maintains consistency in its domains and pathway subjects across all levels, progressively increasing the complexity and depth of the content. This enables learners to return a topic, theme, or subject multiple times along their academic journey. The intricacy of the subject matter or concept intensifies with each subsequent examination, and new knowledge is interconnected with prior knowledge and contextualised within the existing information. These ideas are demonstrated in the field of sets and logic, which is a subject in mathematics, as outlined below:

Table 4: *Sequence of mathematics (sets and logic)*

Level 1		Level 2		Level 3	
Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6

- Objects - Sets	- Objects - Sets - Venn diagram - Set symbols	Sets and logic - Universal set - Subsets - Finite and infinite sets - Equal and equivalent sets - Symbols - Elements of a set	Set and logic - Equal and equivalent sets - Intersection of sets - Union sets - Not an element of - Intersection	Types of sets - Finite/infinite set - Universal sets - Subsets - Equal/equivalent sets - Disjoint sets - Intersection of sets - Venn diagram	Types of sets - Universal sets - Subsets - Intersection of sets - Finite/infinite set - Equal/equivalent sets - Disjoint sets - Venn diagram
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The Cameroon primary school curriculum promotes integration by enabling pupils to engage in a comprehensive approach to learning, free from the limitations typically imposed by subject divisions. The curriculum is organised into domains that consist of integrative route subjects. The curriculum for primary school should encompass a range of subjects including reading, writing, listening, speaking, literature, drama, social studies, maths, science, health, physical education, music, and visual arts. The programme places significant emphasis on the necessity of establishing strong ties with families, possessing a deep understanding of children and their learning processes, and using the community and cultural environment to enhance learning experiences. These are all facets of integration. The teaching and learning processes in elementary school promote integration, allowing students to acquire and apply fundamental abilities across all subjects. This integration also fosters good attitudes towards learning, ensuring continuous success throughout their education. The curriculum emphasises integration through the use of Projects-based learning and integrated learning themes. These instructional tools are effective in meeting the needs of all learners in the classroom and connecting the subject studied with real-world applications. Generally, the curriculum incorporates the following integration attributes:

- 1) Activities aimed at fostering children's attitudes, skills, and knowledge, as well as facilitating their ability to create connections across different subjects in the curriculum.
- 2) Activities that cater to a diverse variety of talents
- 3) Activities that are originated and led by both the teacher and the student.
- 4) Experiences that involve the entire class, small groups, or individuals.
- 5) Possibilities for engaging in critical and innovative thinking
- 6) Evaluation conducted by the teacher, peers, and oneself.
- 7) Opportunities for holistic learning experiences.

Articulation, the act of clearly demonstrating the interconnectedness of student experiences in a logical and sequential manner, is another prominent component in this programme. Articulation is facilitated through interdisciplinary learning, promoting an integrated curriculum that encourages the exchange and interconnection of ideas. The curriculum integrates several pieces of knowledge into a whole narrative by linking it with the real world through its content, learning experiences, and teaching methods. There is coherence among the subjects/content at the same level (since succeeding material is based on preceding one), coherence or connections between levels of instruction, and a connection between subjects. For instance, the study of the English language is integrated with other disciplines such as Mathematics, Science & Technology, and French.

A balanced curriculum is a curriculum that selects activities and subjects for different grade levels based on the comprehensive development of learners. It fosters the development of key human abilities across several domains and ensures a harmonious blend of scientific and artistic disciplines, as well as academic and technical/vocational subjects. It encompasses organisation within its range and contributes to the progress of all specified educational goals. The justification for the aspects of balance in this curriculum is as follows:

- 1) This curriculum is founded on the concepts of experiential learning, where learners actively engage in the teaching and learning process to acquire genuine and firsthand information.

- 2) Psychological aspect: The curriculum allows learners to engage in activities based on their individual preferences, age, skills, capabilities, requirements, and desires.
- 3) Prioritise holistic development: The curriculum places importance on nurturing the physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of a child's personality. This guarantees a harmonious acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitude (holistic development of learners) through diverse activities.
- 4) The curriculum fosters the development of leadership traits in children, including initiative, integrity, enthusiasm, planning, confidence, character, courage, clarity of thinking, independent judgement, and decision making.
- 5) Child-centred: The curriculum prioritises the child's interests, needs, talents, age, grade, and life. The learner is considered the focal point of all activity.
- 6) Activity-centred: The material focuses on engaging both the physical and mental aspects of the individual. That is, it offers opportunities for physical, intellectual, social, creative, cultural, and aesthetic activity.
- 7) The curriculum is pragmatic in nature. Vocational and technical education prioritises the cultivation of diverse skills among learners.
- 8) Correlation: The subjects are interrelated and taught in a cohesive manner.
- 9) Community-oriented: The curriculum is designed to address the specific needs and challenges of a particular community. Specifically, the challenges of real life are incorporated into the curriculum.
- 10) Fosters democratic values: The curriculum places importance on cultivating democratic values in learners, such as promoting the adoption of democratic norms and standards of behaviour.
- 11) Work experience: The curriculum offers a wide range of work experiences in several fields such as science and technology, agriculture, home economics, arts and crafts, etc. These experiences are highly valuable and applicable to many aspects of life.

The notion of continuity is apparent in the primary school curriculum of Cameroon in the following means:

- a) The curriculum is designed to be aligned with the learners' prior knowledge and personal growth. The curriculum is specifically developed to progressively build upon the prior learning experiences and accomplishments of each learner, encompassing the knowledge and skills they have learned.
- b) The curriculum plans and statements are designed based on our understanding of learners' development and their learning process. They incorporate well-defined concepts of progression and sequence.
- c) The programme demonstrates a systematic advancement based on both chronological age and cognitive development. The Curriculum plans and statements incorporate well-defined concepts of progression, encompassing a clear scope and sequence to enhance and advance prior knowledge and abilities. The sequence is adaptable and responsive to the individual requirements of learners, rather than being inflexible. The Curriculum delineates anticipated results, demonstrating growth and advancement in every academic domain.
- d) The curriculum is designed to maintain continuity and coherence. There exists a meticulously organised written syllabus for every academic discipline. The curriculum is an uninterrupted educational programme that demonstrates growth and advancement without any distinct divisions at any stage. The programme presents a comprehensive and organised plan that includes information, abilities, attitudes, and intended results. It also offers a clear structure and order, allowing for appropriate options and choices. The curriculum establishes connections between components/subjects at all levels to ensure articulation.

V. Conclusion

The consideration of curriculum ideology and design dimensions remains a crucial factor in the process of curriculum conception, development, and implementation. Undoubtedly, these two crucial elements serve as a perspective for curriculum specialists and instructional designers when they plan and build a certain curriculum. The investigation uncovers the ideas and fundamental design elements that underpin the elementary school curriculum in Cameroon. Although there is ongoing debate about which ideology should have the most influence on a curriculum and in which areas, it is evident that the primary school curriculum in Cameroon takes an eclectic approach, with transaction and transformation ideologies being the most prominent. The curriculum

clearly incorporates fundamental ideas of curricular organisation, including horizontal and vertical organisation. Therefore, in order to achieve the country's goal of development by 2035 and address the issue of learners' independence, it is essential for curriculum designers and educational leaders to devise suitable methods and ensure the provision of necessary resources and training for those responsible for implementing the curriculum.

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