

# **Professional Orientation. A new approach to language acquisition, employability (skills) and professional guidance in German modules at the University of Namibia**

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## **Abstract**

*Employability and employability skills or attributes, such as teamwork, problem-solving, and communication or language skills as well as ICT or digital skills, have become important aspects in the context of teaching and learning in higher education. In order to respond to these changes and needs, the German Section at the University of Namibia introduced in 2019 “Professional Orientation” in their first-year modules to raise students’ awareness about the job market and to increase their language competence. Different professions and careers are introduced by guest speakers to give students insights into various professional careers in German. This is combined with a holistic language training that involves reading, listening, speaking, and especially writing. This approach, as observations and evaluations have shown, enhances students’ language competence in speaking, listening but also reading, and especially writing, as one subject-specific employability skill, communication skills in general as well as digital skills. Further, it raises students’ awareness about employment opportunities and*

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*specific skills, especially in a subject that lacks a professional specification.*

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## **Introduction**

Employability has become an increasingly important aspect in a rapidly changing higher education environment, not only as a quality aspect, but also in the context of teaching and learning to train specific skills and offer professional guidance (c.f. Shivoro, Shalyefu, & Kadhila, 2017; Brew 2010; Barnett 2004). To respond to these changes and needs, the German Section at the University of Namibia (UNAM) introduced in 2019 a new component, namely “Professional Orientation” in their first-year modules to raise students’ awareness about the job market and to increase their language competence for better employability and, lastly, also to enhance their digital competence.

The concept of “Language Learning and Employability” (Radke 2018) was developed by the German Department at the University of Amsterdam and subsequently adapted and modified according to the needs of the German Section of UNAM. Different professions or careers are introduced to give students insights into various professional careers with German and to raise

awareness of employability skills and attributes. Against this concept, language training is arranged where the crucial skills of reading, listening, speaking, and especially writing as well as general communication skills are practiced accommodating the diverse language levels of students in the same module. Besides this, students enhance their digital competence as essays are corrected in the correction mode and, if possible, submitted through the learning platform *Moodle*. With this, three employability attributes, namely professional guidance and language competence / communication skills in a subject that does not offer a distinct professional specification as well as digital competence are trained within the unit.

In this paper, we will first go into the aspect of employability and employability attributes. Second, we will introduce and present the unit “Professional Orientation”, its structure, the language learning aspect as well as the different clusters of professions or institutions selected to illustrate its application in the German modules. Eventually, we will present observations and evaluate the concept through feedback from students as well as lecturers.

### **Employability and Employability Skills**

Employability and employability skills have become an important aspect in higher education institutions as part of quality assurance with effects on teaching and learning in tertiary institutions all around the world (Brew 2010; Pring 2001; Barnett 2004). In a changing environment “higher education [has] to open up and to become more responsive to the interests of employers and the needs of students as lifelong learners” (Sin, Tavares, & Amaral,

2017, 4). Especially, as summarised by Shivorov et al. (2017), since employment patterns shift from traditional employment and companies move towards customer-oriented service. For this, more flexibility and spontaneity are required and as a result of these changes, graduates need to be prepared for life-long learning, and self-development to stay employable. Also “recent European policies, such as the Bologna process, have promoted employability as a purpose for higher education in order to ensure graduates’ preparedness for the labour market” (Sin et al., 2017, 1). In a changing environment, “higher education [has] to open up and to become more responsive to the interests of employers and the needs of students as lifelong learners” (Sin et al., 2017, 4).

The discourse of employability differentiates two understandings of the term, as it can firstly entail employment, meaning to obtain a job, and secondly, skills developed by experience in curricula and extra-curricular activities (Shivorov et al. 2017). However, most research concludes that rather the “ability” or “abilities” than the aspect of “employ” (Sin et al. 2017, 4) are important in higher education and “in the end it is the employers who convert the ‘employability’ of the graduate into employment” (Harvey, as cited in Sin et al. 2017, 4). Therefore, the discussion on employability is dominated by the discussion of skills and employability attributes, which are pertinent to identify and integrating them into teaching and learning. Therefore, the constantly changing world of work requires a change in higher education: “graduates need other attributes in addition to subject-specific knowledge and discipline” (Shivorov et al. 2017, 249) and employers put a higher importance on employability attributes than on academic achievements

(Shivoro et al. 2017). Therefore, qualities and skills in addition to subject-specific skills are needed, which are described as transferable skills, key skills, soft skills, or generic skills. Such skills are “reflective thinking, application of skills, and self-knowledge and attitude and drive of the graduate” (Shivoro et al. 2017, 256), communication, presentation, critical thinking, research, organization, teamwork, but also language skills, and digital skills. Digital competence also plays a highly important role and is a recent concept that describes technology-related skills such as ICT skills, technology skills, information technology skills, 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills, information literacy, digital literacy, and digital skills (Ilomäki 2011, 1) and to “perform tasks effectively in a digital environment“ (Kyong-Jee and Bonk 2006, 23). Against this background, it becomes obvious that digital literacy or competency is important not only in our society and our work world, but needs to be incorporated into teaching and learning in HE to enhance students’ digital literacy as an employment skill to give them better and more equal opportunities. As a study on business management shows, the influence of using ICT on students’ skills has an effect on their motivation, self-esteem, ICT skills, collaborative skills, subject knowledge, information handling skills, metacognitive skills, etc. (Metilda and Neena 2017, 285). Research also shows that using ICT leads to more cooperation among learners within and beyond school and a more interactive relationship between students and teachers (Rieber and Welliver 1989, quoted in Saba et al. 2013, 61). According to Saba, Igwe, Mogaji, Mustapha (2013), e-learning supports different learning, e.g., cooperative, reflective, responsible, and experimental learning.

Consequently, institutions have to look into different ways of teaching and learning and should incorporate work-integrated learning (WIL) strategies such as work placements, internships, fieldwork, sandwich-year degrees, job shadowing, cooperative education, and service-learning (Shivoro et al. 2017) to enhance employability skills as well as attributes. Sin et al. (2017, 4) also suggest that “parallel stand-alone activities for the development of study skills (e.g. writing skills) or generic skills (e.g. cv writing or career guidance), as a bolt-on development, located within the remit of either career services or academics.” Such assistance in writing skills and career guidance is important for students especially those coming from homes, where such support is not given, and studying a subject that does not offer specific professional training. In addition, the introduction of guest speakers has proven to be a significant contribution to employability as “the educational experience gained from guest speakers and the ability of the speakers to provide insights into the use of employability skills in the workplace” (Riebe, Sibson, Roepen, & Meakins 2013, 56) is a very important component. Further, this form of engagement with the industry can motivate students’ commitment and learning about workplace skills (Riebe et al. 2013) and lastly, it connects “university, students, staff and employers in new ways both through and beyond the curriculum” (Riebe et al. 2013, 58).

To create or raise awareness about employment and employability, the German Section at UNAM has over the years developed a number of activities such as the annual career day “Your Career with German. German in the Business World” (UNAM 2018), cv writing in a module that addresses various types of texts, different group-assignments and project-based

learning among others and lately the unit “Professional Orientation” was introduced in first-year German Studies to address the German language skills and employment options as well as employability skills.

### **Language Skills and Employability**

As communication is one of the general employability skills, language plays an important role when thinking about employability skills. Against this, communication can either be the application of the first or second or even foreign language literacy. Further, it can mean the ability to produce clear, structured written work, effective listening and questioning skills, or effective negotiating and persuasion skills (Thomas, Piquette, & McMaster 2016). Mostly, these language skills target the first language of the country or English as the international language (Thomas et al. 2016), and also foreign languages in Europe (Grasmane and Grasmane 2011) as an additional language are considered a plus. In this context, German is offered at UNAM as a language course and compulsory, like other foreign languages, in programmes such as tourism or media studies. However, in the field of language studies or foreign language learning, language is not only a general skill and a plus. Further, language is also the subject skill or discipline skill and the language of instruction in German Studies modules. In this case, students have already a knowledge of the language, often on different levels depending on their background. The programme entails modules on German literature and culture, history, and linguistics which are conducted in German and include readings, presentations, and assignments

in German. In some cases, there are advanced language courses to continue the language training. Often, however, the language skills, although part of the programme, are neglected in favour of other aspects of the discipline and in fear to be reduced to a language course only.

Traditionally, language acquisition and foreign language learning focus on four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Fig. 1).

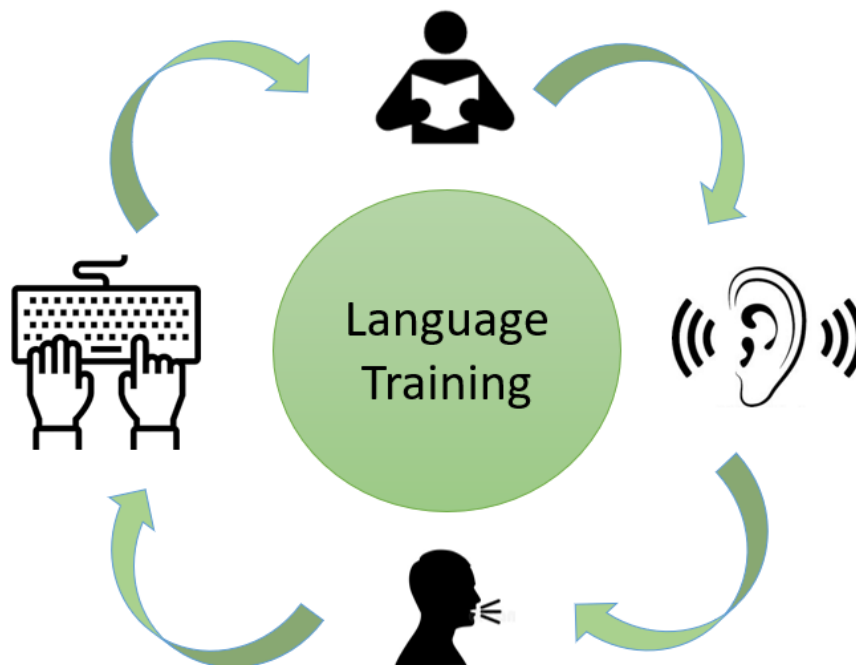


Fig. 1: Language Training: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing

In language courses with all learners on the same language level, the teaching and learning are usually facilitated with the help of a textbook that follows a gradual progression of all skills, introducing the relevant vocabulary and grammar, and building on the learners' knowledge and competence of the



language. With a heterogenous class of language learners, language learning is a challenge as there is no general level. However, language learning needs to take place as language is not only part of the discipline but also part of communication. Therefore, the language is a double employability skill and needs to receive more attention to equip the student for the relevant profession, e.g. as a German teacher, journalist, in tourism, working in a German environment or in a company, where German plays an important role for internal or/ and external communication. Therefore, the entire spectrum of language skills is necessary to provide for all eventualities.

### **Structure and Organisation of the “Professional Orientation”**

Language skills in German are obviously the subject knowledge of a German programme and at the same time the mode of instruction in classes on literature, culture, history, and linguistics. Language skills training is therefore always included and at the same time sometimes neglected over the content, although an important aspect of the subject and an employability attribute. If working in a German company, in a German-speaking environment, or as a teacher of German, German language skills are very important as the students are eventually not evaluated by their subject knowledge (literature, linguistics, theories, and concepts), but rather by the correct use and application of the language. Therefore, the German Section at UNAM has decided to put a stronger emphasis on language training and on the correct use of language and communication skills. This is now combined with guidance or counselling regarding prospective careers and

introduced in the first year of the German programme, the adapted and modified the concept of Language Learning and Employability (Radke 2018) from the German Department at the University of Amsterdam. With this project, we combine the presentation of different jobs or companies with language training, which should not only give incentives about possible future careers but it is aligned with a holistic language training approach on reading, listening, speaking, and writing. By facilitating the course online via a learning platform, using online reading material and / or online presentations, and especially using the correction mode in *Microsoft Word*, students enhance also their digital competence for future employment.

The concept of “Language Learning and Employability” (Radke 2018) presents how language training is combined with career counselling for future employability (Fig. 2). The course, offered as German as a Foreign language module, focuses on three different career clusters, namely “education and training” (Journalism) as well as “translation” (Arts and Culture) and “business and marketing” (Public Administration). The clusters, which take about four weeks, are structured in the same way: the topic or career is introduced by a text, a guest speaker, preferably an alumnus of the programme, is invited for a talk and a question-and-answer session completes the cluster. Lastly, the students write an essay about the career, its advantages, and disadvantages. The essays are marked twice as students have to analyse their grammar mistakes and correct them accordingly. With this, not only style and structure but also grammar is accommodated.

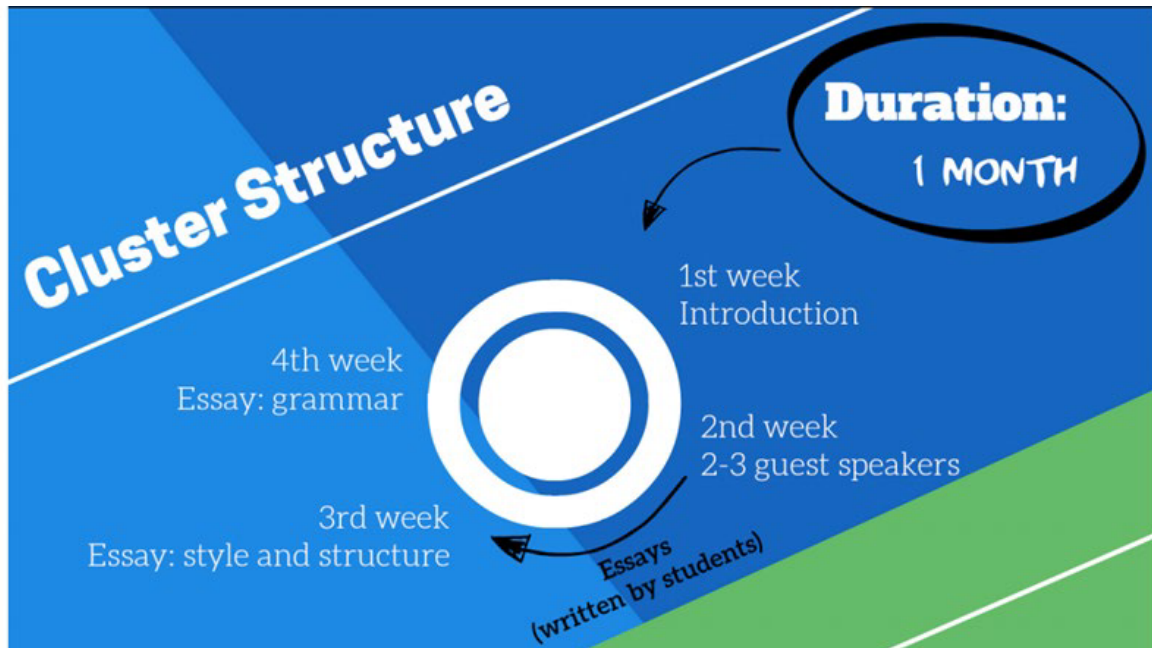


Fig. 2: Cluster Structure in Language Learning and Employability (Radke 2018)

This cluster structure was adjusted to the situation at UNAM, where the German classes have four contact sessions a week and a stronger emphasis on the language component in each section of the cluster. The cluster was also divided into four different parts: For an introduction and as a pre-reading, the students receive a text on the respective career providing a reading exercise and the introduction of relevant vocabulary. Further, students prepare at least three questions for the guest speaker in the next class. With the guest speaker, students need to listen to the presentation as a listening exercise and interact with the speaker to have a more active session (Riebe et al. 2013) and practice their speaking. In some cases, excursions to institutions are organised to get an idea about the workplace or if the speaker is not able to come to the university. The last step covers the writing of the essay of about 200 to 250 words, depending on the level of German (Foreign

Language Learner, Second Language Learner/First Language Speaker). Usually, students write about the profession and state their opinion. However, the essay structure can vary for example to present the advantages and disadvantages of the profession (Radke 2018) or to ask the students to discuss the profession along with employability skills and attributes. In addition, if students had not been actively involved in the discussion with the guest speaker due to students' different cultural backgrounds, the essay writing also presents a reflective practice (Riebe et al. 2013).

When marking the first version, more marks are given for structure and content than for the language, and mistakes are only identified and labelled according to the grammatical category (Fig. 3).

#### **Korrekturabkürzungen / Abbreviations of corrections**

<b>A</b>	Adjektiv / adjective
<b>Art</b>	Artikel / article
<b>E</b>	Endung / ending
<b>F</b>	fehlendes Wort / missing word
<b>Ka</b>	Kasus / case
<b>Ko</b>	Konjunktion / conjunction
<b>P</b>	Pronomen / pronoun
<b>Prä</b>	Präposition / preposition
<b>R</b>	Rechtschreibung / spelling
<b>Sa</b>	Satzstellung / sentence structure
<b>S</b>	Substantiv / noun
<b>St</b>	Stil / stile

<b>I</b>	Interpunktion / punctuation
<b>V</b>	Verbform (Konjugation etc.) / form of the verb (conjugation)
<b>V/K</b>	Kongruenz Subjekt-Verb / subject-verb agreement
<b>V/Z</b>	Verb – Zeitform / verb – tense
<b>WW</b>	Wortwahl / word choice
<b>?</b>	Nicht verständlich, neu schreiben / not comprehensible, rewrite

Fig. 3: Korrekturabkürzungen / abbreviation of corrections

Further, the comment function was used when the mistake was not easy to mark through the abbreviations and for further comments for example on structure or cohesion/coherence. For the second version, students must rewrite the essay correcting the identified mistakes according to the abbreviation (Fig. 4).

Thema: Berufliche Orientierung (Radiomoderator)

Diese Essay ist über der Beruf Radiomoderator. Am ersten gehe ich über Anforderunge von der Beruf erklären, danach, was der job beinhaltet und zuletzt Ausbildungen.

Die Anforderunge von der Beruf Radiomoderator umfassen am wichtigsten Berufserfahrung im Journalisten bereich und Medienerfahrung. Eine Radiomoderator muss auch eine gute ausdruckstarke Stimme haben, eine ausgezeichnete Sprachgefühl, eine sehr gute Allgemeinbildung und auch Improvationsfähigkeit. Weitere Anforderunge sind Teamfähigkeit, Belastbarkeit und man muss bereit wird für unregelmässigen Arbeitszeiten.

Es gibt mehr zu als Radiomoderator/in arbeiten als nur durch die Sendung informieren und kommentieren. Bevor die Sendung muss die Radiomoderator vorbereiten z.B. wenn sie jemand im Studio Umfragen musst. Sie müssen durch Interviews oder Diskussionsrunde gehen, also das Gespräch leiten. Sie recherchieren auch selbst für die Sendung und gestalten Beiträge redaktionell. Radiomoderator/in müssen auch schreiben und lesen über Reporter und auch Reporter Termine machen.

Um eine gute Radiomoderator zu wessen man muss sehr viel trainieren. Pratische Bildungsweg führt über private Radio- und Fernsehstudios. Man kann auch bei Uni-radios oder Internetradios als Volontar arbeiten und

rewiewer Prä  
rewiewer Sehr gute Einleitung!!!!  
rewiewer hat formatiert  
rewiewer E  
rewiewer KA  
rewiewer Das sind zwei Verben, es reicht  
rewiewer R  
rewiewer hat formatiert  
rewiewer hier brauchen Sie auch einen  
rewiewer E  
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rewiewer R  
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rewiewer R  
rewiewer V  
rewiewer E  
rewiewer Dieser Satz passt nicht,  
rewiewer Prä und dann Ka ändern  
rewiewer Art  
rewiewer WW  
rewiewer E  
rewiewer WW und R  
rewiewer V  
rewiewer WW (Subjekt) und

Fig. 4. Example of a marked essay (first version)

Although not all mistakes are always corrected and sometimes students change the sentence entirely, the second version usually shows a clear improvement in the grammatical correctness of the texts. The second version is not only marked but the mistakes are corrected for the students to see how the sentence should read (Fig. 5).

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Thema: Berufliche Orientierung

Dieses Essay ist über ~~die-den~~ Beruf Radiomoderator. ~~Zum-erstenerst~~ ~~gehe~~ ~~werde~~ ich die Anforderungen ~~n~~ von ~~diesem~~ Beruf erklären, danach, was der Job beinhaltet und zuletzt ~~gehe-werde~~ ich die Ausbildung nennen.

Die Anforderungen ~~von-diean den~~ Beruf Radiomoderator umfassen wichtige Berufserfahrung im ~~Bereich Journalisten-Journalismus Bereich~~ und ~~medienerfahrung~~ ~~Medienerfahrung~~. Eine Radiomoderator muss auch eine gute ausdrucksstarke Stimme haben, ~~einen~~ ausgezeichnete ~~sn~~ Sprachgefühl, eine sehr gute Allgemeinbildung und auch Improvisationsfähigkeit. Weitere Anforderungen sind Teamfähigkeit, Belastbarkeit und man muss bereit für unregelmäßige Arbeitszeiten ~~sein~~.

~~Ein/e~~ Radiomoderator/in macht mehr als nur durch die Sendung informieren und kommentieren. ~~Bevor-Vor die-der~~ Sendung muss der Radiomoderator vorbereiten z.B. wenn ~~Sie-man~~ jemanden im Studio interviewen ~~mussüssen~~. Man ~~musst~~ durch Interviews oder ~~Diskussionsrunden~~ ~~gehenführen~~, also das Gespräch leiten. Man ~~muss~~ ~~recherchieren~~ auch selbst für Sendung ~~recherchieren~~ und ~~gestalten~~ ~~Beitraäge~~ redaktionell ~~gestalten~~. Radiomoderator/in müssen schreiben und auch Reporter Termine machen.

Um ~~einer~~ gute ~~rn~~ Radiomoderator zu werden, muss man sehr viel trainieren.

Fig. 5. Marked essay (second version) with significantly less grammatical mistakes.

As some of the students had initial problems with rewriting the essays, the first essays were corrected in class, so students could get back to the lecturer if they had questions. With the second essay, students worked more independently some really reflecting on their mistakes. Using the correction mode in *Microsoft Word* – especially during times of e-learning – raised the awareness of missing ICT computer skills of many students. Often, students did not follow instructions and comments, and instead of working on the same document were rather rewriting the entire essay. This problem did not occur when working with hard copies in class, but illustrates, even more, the need to include technology to improve students' digital skills. However, through instructions and explanations of the software, the functions of the correction mode could be explained, and digital competence enhanced. Further, when using the learning platform, additional videos and explanations of grammatical or lexical features were uploaded for students to learn and correct their mistakes individually.

As the “Professional Orientation” unit is only one unit in the module besides other topics, only two cluster circles were included in one module. However, we integrated the unit “Professional Orientation” into three different modules in the first and second year, namely “Foundations of German Studies”, a foundation course that introduces students to the subject, to academic forms, but also to Germany and German-speaking countries. Further, it was included in the module “Basic German Patterns”, a grammar course, and in the second-year course “Text analysis, presentation and directed writing”, introducing writing and presentation skills.

## **Introduction of Professions and Institutions**

Having various opportunities to integrate the “Professional Orientation” as an independent unit in some of the core modules in the first two years of the German programme, we looked at different careers and professions and identified which ones could be of interest and in which professions we have former students of German. Many of our students in the Bachelor of Arts programme, not only the ones that study a Bachelor of Education, opt eventually for the teaching profession as it is one sector, where employment with German can be found in Namibia and most likely because it is known to students. Although it is a profession that is familiar, we invited a teacher as a guest speaker, and it turned out that students were interested in the profession as they had not looked at it from a teacher’s perspective. As the presenter was also a former student in the German Section and German is not her first language, the current students could identify with her and could see that this is a profession, where they could marvel as well even as foreign language learners. As Namibia has two German radio programmes, the profession of a radio presenter formed another career cluster. The guest speaker included much information on Namibia Broadcasting Cooperation (NBC) and Namibia, which allowed students to identify with the presentation. Information about working with music and interviewing people and flexible working hours also added advantages to the career. Further, a developer at an NGO, and political institutions were included as well as the profession of a cultural coordinator at the Goethe-Institut (German cultural centre where language classes and cultural activities are offered). The Goethe-Institut presents itself as a possible future employer for students of



German, where they can find positions in teaching, as coordinators, or in the library section. This session was deliberately not held at the university but was organised with a visit to the Goethe-Institut, it introduced some of the students for the first time to the German cultural centre and to its opportunities for learners of German. This was particularly useful as the Goethe-Institut is a place where students of German can find material for their own studies to enhance their language skills. Another visit was paid to the university's own marketing and communication department where students can always apply for internships. As one colleague in the department is fluent in German, the presentation in German was possible. Students were not only excited about this opportunity but also realised that there are interesting careers they had not even known about and that opportunities are right there for them.

Namibia has not only a German-speaking minority of about 20.000 speakers, a newspaper, and two radio stations in the German language, therefore, one is tempted to say that this project is only possible in Namibia. However, as we advertise the language, one always needs to have future career possibilities and future professions in mind. With this, one can be quite creative about the guest speakers. Not only former students give ideas, but also areas where German language skills are needed or serve as a plus. As we shifted to online teaching during the pandemic, we also made use of *YouTube* videos about professions and investigated guest speakers from outside Namibia via video conferencing. Careers or professions we had left out were the tourism industry, and the German newspaper *Die Allgemeine Zeitung* since we have another module, a writing project with the newspaper

and tourism is usually very prominent at the annual Career Fair for German. However, there are many possibilities and opportunities for presentations or guest speakers from different professions or different fields. Thanks to the presentations, firstly, the students listen and interact with the speaker practicing their listening and speaking skills. Secondly, students are exposed to various professions they might not have considered as a future profession and they learn about the profession and possible career opportunities (Riebe et al. 2013). Lastly, the speaker shares insights into skills and employability attributes for the respective career path (Riebe et al. 2013).

### **Findings and Evaluation**

As we evaluated the project, the students liked the activity of having different guest speakers and even excursions to the institutions. Moreover, they appreciated the various insights into certain professions raising awareness of different career opportunities. Also, possibilities for internships or attachments were noted positively in the feedback form or even during the class discussions and the students deliberately asked for a continuation of the unit in the second year. In regard to language skills, the career clusters emphasized writing skills and with writing skills also grammar. Although a grammatical analysis of the mistakes and an explanation, like the University of Amsterdam provided for the rewriting (Radke 2018), were left out. Still, by asking the students to rewrite and think about their mistakes, most of them considered the mistakes and often they were eliminated. Comparing the students' first and second versions, one can see as the example indicated that

students improved their essays. Further, due to the writing and rewriting, students improved their writing skills significantly as they became more fluent, extended their vocabulary, and made fewer grammatical mistakes. As a lecturer, one could also observe that most students were more confident talking and interacting in German. Evaluations, module evaluations as well as an evaluation of the unit “Professional orientation” after the first cohort, revealed that most students themselves felt they had improved their language skills and they could mostly identify even the area where they have improved (Fig. 6).

I feel like there is a huge improvement on my listening and understanding after the orientation.

not sure

Yes, I am able to grammatically write better.

Yes. I definitely [sic] saw an improvement in grammar and vocabulary here and there.

I am not sure

yes I did because we did a lot on grammar [sic] this semester

Yes I have.

Fig. 6: Individual feedback of students about the unit “Professional Orientation”

Lastly, as parts of the unit were conducted online or used ICT skills, students had also the possibility to make use of different ICT skills such as

communicating when submitting the essay through email, the correction mode in *Microsoft Word*, *YouTube* videos on grammar and vocabulary, online submissions, but also recording the presentations as a source for their essays. Here, also ethical considerations were discussed regarding permission for recording, etc.

The feedback about the unit was positive throughout and most of the students expressed to have it continued in the second year. However, some indicated that they would like to do it without writing the essays as this was the most demanding and time-consuming activity in each cluster. In the overall module evaluations, essay writing was seen as a good activity to improve writing and also language skills in general.

### **Summary and Recommendation**

In summary, one can conclude that the “Professional Orientation” is a valuable and good learning unit for students in first- and second-year German Studies that combines different areas, namely language learning and a professional orientation or career counselling, where students are exposed to first-hand experience and employability skills and lastly digital skills. The students’ active participation, as well as the evaluation of the unit, indicate that they liked the unit, some more on the aspect of professional guidance and others on the aspect of language learning. Some students suggested keeping the professional orientation aspect, but to reduce the essay writing one could combine the career guidance with other language activities, other soft skills, or some academic learning for example, organising the guest

speaker (invitation, communication, introduction) or evaluating the guest speaker and the professional orientation by setting up a questionnaire and analysing the results, which would add more opportunities for ICT skills. Other possibilities are to combine language learning and employability with cv writing and job interviews where students learn not only how a cv in German looks like, but can prepare for job interviews in German as already included in the module “German for Business and Tourism”.

As employability is an important aspect in today’s education and higher education and especially in countries with high unemployment rates, it is of utmost importance to evaluate programmes according to their learning outcomes and their employability skills, to identify subject-specific and general employability skills and to include them into the teaching and learning. Further, it is important to raise and create awareness about employability and employability skills and even attributes among students as they need to be aware of what employers look for and what they should focus on. Students need to understand that not only the marks but mainly the skills make them employable. As the German language is the subject skill as well as employability skill for many professions, intense language training and language awareness are pertinent and not only subject skills in literary and cultural German Studies. Furthermore, teaching and learning need to include more digital formats for students to enhance their ICT and digital competence for future careers and to be technically equipped for employment in the 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution and the 21<sup>st</sup> century or during a pandemic like the Covid-19 experience has just shown.

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