

Original Research Article

From Training to Professional Practice and Vice-Versa: Sight Translation as a Specialisation Subject in the Interpreter Training Programme of the Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters (ASTI)

Azambou Ndongmo Laurent Roger^{*} and Tinsoba Ben Halid Moubarak

Abstract

Advanced School of Translators and
Interpreters (ASTI), University of
Buea, Cameroon

***Corresponding Author's Email:**
azamboulaurent@yahoo.fr

The remarkable increase in the number of interpretation training programmes across the world for the past twenty or thirty years (Gile, 2009) has given way to an increasing interest in evaluating these programmes. This evaluation, while it may not be comprehensive, should an evaluation ever be so, can simply be limited to considering a particular aspect of a programme. Sight translation is a fairly common exercise present in interpreter training programmes. However, its relevance and/or its pedagogical weight are sometimes questioned according to the context and level in the training process. This article aims at contributing to this debate. It therefore takes as case study, the interpreter training programme of the Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters (ASTI) of the University of Buea in Cameroon and based on statistical data, looks into the place occupied by sight translation in the professional practice by graduates of this programme, between 2008 and 2015. The results, which are quite edifying, are supportive of maintaining and even reinforcing this exercise in the programme, given the peculiarity of the Cameroonian professional context and the African context in general.

Keywords: Programme evaluation, Interpreter Training, Sight Translation, ASTI

INTRODUCTION

Most conference interpreting training programmes have sight translation as a course. Lambert (2004) defines sight translation as an oral transposition of a written message from one language to another. More specifically and at the didactic level, there are two types of sight translation identified by Lambert: sight translation with preparation, during which the interpreter has time to explore the text that needs to be sight translated and to do some terminology research; and sight translation without preparation during which, the interpreter does not have time to prepare. This second type of sight translation is deemed more demanding than the first type. Numerous authors have addressed sight translation,

either on the technical aspect of skills to develop to better perform the exercise, on the aspect of interpreter training programme redesign, or simply to question its relevance in these programmes. For instance, Akbari (2017), a researcher in translation and technologies at the KU Leuven University of Belgium, published, in 2017, a pilot study themed "Needed skills and strategies to improve the efficiency of sight translation in classroom context". Through this study, the author sought to assess the sight translation performance of 10 students and 4 professional interpreters with English as a "B" language into Persian as an "A" language. Akbari transcribed the rendition of the subjects of the study, considered their speed and

assessed their performance following the tripartite model of Lee (2008), that is, precision, rendition quality and the quality of target language expressions. The results reveal that the student interpreters should improve their skills in sight translation as well as their fast reading in order to be able to perceive the source text and to distinguish main ideas from secondary ones. Moreover, the data indicate that the students keep doing literal translation or a word-for-word translation as they cannot do away with the text and the source language form. In other words, they cannot "deverbalise" (Seleskovitch, 1975). However, this study has some limitations. Akbari actually presented sight translation skills that professional interpreters have, which student interpreters do not have and the author failed to focus on the effects of preparatory activities on the performances of the subjects. The author makes various recommendations including creating strategies to improve the quality of target language expressions. A similar study titled "What skills do student interpreters need to learn in sight translation training?" was conducted and published in 2012 by Jieun Lee about the sight translation rendition by students and professionals from English into Korean. After assessing their rendition based on precision, target language expression and speed, the author concluded that the students need to further develop their reading competences in order to better understand source texts and to make a distinction between main ideas and secondary ones. Moreover, analysing the data also revealed that they need to make deliberate efforts to distance themselves from the source text and develop competencies in translation to avoid literal translations. However, the study did not focus on the effect of preliminary preparation on the renditions of the students and the author urges for more research to be conducted on the issue and for new sight translation teaching methods to be created so that the teachers can help students reach a professional level.

While these researchers have been calling on students to strengthen their capacities to reach a professional level in sight translation and for new sight translation teaching methods to be created, other researchers present new interpreter training programmes without sight translation. As a matter of fact, Afolabi (2018) made some suggestions for the optimisation of translation and interpreting training programmes in Nigeria. Drawing inspiration from reference programmes of ASTI and the University of Ghana, which in one way or the other, belong to the same geographical context as Nigeria as well as results from the Nigerian translation and interpreting market needs, and particularly taking into account the socio-economic context of the country, the author proposes a reference framework, which aims at facilitating the optimisation process of the Master in Translation and the Master in Interpretation of Nigerian universities.

In fact, the interpretation programme he proposed does not feature sight translation in the 4 semesters. This

proposal, obviously, reflects the Nigerian market and socio-economic context.

A redesign of training programmes takes not only into account socio-political and academic situations but also the targeted goal and the market. That is what Durieux (2005) stated in the following terms:

[...] designing a translation syllabus (in our case, interpretation) for a given establishment in our country involves conducting a job market study, an audit of the political, economic and academic situation in which the syllabus will be implemented, an analysis of the targeted objective of that syllabus and a survey on the available means to achieve it.

Kiraly (2005) supported this position with the following:

[...] market research is a mainstay of modern business practice. If we want our products and services to be accepted by the market, we must conduct survey research among market participants. If we want to investigate the efficacy of the Translator Education programs we offer, one of our main sources of information will be the translation services market.

In fact, a subject is relevant in a training programme by the fact that this subject is practised in the market by the products of the programme, or it gives them an added value in their professional activity. In the same way, practice in the market by the graduates must inform training. This article examines the place that the practice of sight translation occupies with graduates of the Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters (ASTI) and consequently, questions the relevance of the subject in the training programme.

Literature review

The theoretical framework of this article is inspired by the practice-based theory of Ball & Cohen (1999) and the CIPP model (Context-Input-Process-Product) of Stufflebeam (1971). Finally, an empirical framework is developed, which consists in presenting optimisation cases, harmonisation of interpreter training programmes, comparative studies, a few approaches of interpreter training programmes and case studies.

Theoretical framework

As previously indicated, the practice-based theory by Ball and Cohen (1999) and the CIPP model by Stufflebeam (1971) will serve as models for this article.

The practice-based theory

Ball & Cohen (1999) developed the practice-based theory, which promotes "...learning in practice and from practice...". Learning in practice and from practice means

that a good performance on the professional level requires practice-based training. In other words, practice on the field must be informed by training, which, in return, must be based on practice. The products of a training school practising in the market, more precisely, interpreters, must be able to inform the training school on one aspect or a particular subject in the training. In the same vein, the training school must be based on the practical experience of products in the market for better performances in the training. This article aims at examining the place that sight translation occupies in the professional practice of interpreters trained by the ASTI programme. These empirical data should inform training and therefore, guide possible programme redesign.

The CIPP (Context-Input-Process-Product) Model

This model focuses on decision-making with the goal to make improvements i.e. taking adequate decisions. According to Stufflebeam (1971), the four (4) levels of the CIPP Model are: Context, Input, Process, and Product.

Context is all about the environment that determines the training needs and factors or underlying issues to these needs. In Context, a feasibility study is conducted in order to determine the purposes and goals of the training.

Inputs deal with programme actors (learners, teachers, etc.), material and financial resources and strategies that will be put in place to achieve the objectives initially defined.

Process focuses on the evaluation of the training processes notably teaching and learning.

Ultimately, the last element of the model i.e. Product, deals with the outputs (reactions of the students, etc.) and the programme results.

This study followed this evaluation model as it deals with practice by the products of the training school, at the fourth level of the model.

Empirical framework

This section presents the hourly weight of sight translation in some training programmes and secondly a few comparative market studies and other specific research cases relating to sight translation.

A few renowned schools across the world were taken as examples as part of this study. They are notably the *Ecole supérieure d'Interprètes et de Traducteurs (ESIT)* of the University of Sorbonne Paris 3 in France, the Middlebury Institute of International Studies (MIIS) in the United States, which trains at the Master's level in interpretation, among other fields.

Sight translation at ESIT

During the academic year 2016-2017, interpreter training was in 2 years in lecture courses and practical workshops. All the courses are taught by professional conference interpreters and lecturers in their first language. The first year of the Master is dedicated to learning interpreting methods and techniques. As regards the subjects in the programme, the overview table of courses for the 2016-2017 academic year reveals that sight translation is featured only in the second semester of the first year in Master, with 19 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) shared with consecutive interpreting at the intermediary level. In terms of teaching hours, the timetable for the same academic year features sight translation taught only in the second semester for 3h30mn from English into French and vice-versa, and in 30 minutes into Russian.

Sight translation at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies (MIIS)

Like ESIT, the Master in Interpretation at MIIS has 4 semesters with a total of 60 credits. In the general programme description, sight translation is combined with written translation in subjects titled Introduction to Translation Written/Sight (B-A) and Introduction to Translation Written/Sight (A-B). The two subjects make 8 credits taught only in the first semester of the first year of the Master Programme.

To conclude, while at ESIT, sight translation is taught at the second semester of the first year of Master with 19 credits combined with consecutive interpreting, at MIIS, sight translation is only taught in the first semester of the first year of the Master, with 8 credits shared with introduction to written translation.

Interpretation and translation programme optimisation

Afolabi (2018) proposed a reference framework for the optimisation of new training programmes in interpretation and translation, considering the commitment of Nigeria on the world scene, which created needs in the fields of translation and interpretation to facilitate communication. The author has, in fact, noticed an inconsistency between translation and interpreting training programmes in Nigeria and the market. The author, in this regard, interviewed 23 employers, studied 19 Master's level translation and interpretation programmes (eight in France, Canada, Cameroon, Ghana and 11 in Nigeria) in an analytical and comparative manner in order to highlight their characteristics. The results revealed that Nigeria's needs in translation and interpretation are not

sufficiently met and that the country should reconsider the existing training programmes and create new programmes while taking into account the present and future needs. The author therefore proposed strategies including a reference framework, which can be adjusted in accordance with the needs. In that framework, there is a Master in Translation and a Master in Interpretation. For each programme, the author presents the objectives, professional opportunities, duration, admission criteria, graduation requirements, list of courses and various necessary resources (human, physical and material).

For the Master in Conference Interpretation, the author proposed 4 semesters of 100 credits in total without sight translation.

Harmonisation of professional training in translation and interpretation in Nigeria

The study conducted by Nzuanke and Salaudeen (2018) aimed at making proposals for the harmonisation of professional training programmes in translation (Master) in the university institutions of Nigeria. The study was based on the observation that training programmes in Nigerian universities differ from one institution to another. While some Nigerian universities have mainly literary programmes, with two or three subjects in translation, others suggest good training programmes but with no competent staff. The authors therefore adopted the Ball & Cohen theory (1999) of practice-based training and ended up suggesting the creation of a unique training school in translation with a comprehensive professional training programme in translation. As a matter of fact, sight translation is featured in the proposed programme in the first year (language B into language A) and in the second year (language B into language A and vice-versa). According to the authors, all the various subjects in the programme can have credits organised in unit values and in 2 semesters. The authors also think that a thorough analysis of the programme revealed that all units are compulsory. However, the authors did not allocate any hours to sight translation.

Comparative investigation of the translation market in Canada and in Nigeria

Afolabi (2016) conducted a study to compare the two Canadian and Nigerian contexts to find out how they can learn from each other. The decision to compare the two countries is explained by the existence of long-standing relations of cooperation between the two countries (Aire, 2014). As part of the said study, the author presents translation activities of the two countries to evaluate the experience so far. When it comes to the market, Canada is very advanced in terms of regulating the profession. The country has an Order of Translators, Terminologists

and Interpreters of Quebec (OTTIAQ). The sole membership to this order is a reassuring criterion for translator employers. Regarding Nigeria, according to the author, the translation market is open to everybody though there are translation agencies recruiting freelancers. The Nigerian Institute of Translators and Interpreters (NITI), a gathering of professionals, cannot be compared with OTTIAQ at the level of professional commitment. In summary, the author concludes in a pedagogical perspective by emphasising the fact that a particular solution should be found in order to improve the level of translation training in Nigeria to reach that of Canada. According to the author, this requires the stakeholders to take the issue of professional training of translators and interpreters much more seriously. The author urged them to work for the optimisation of the training in professional translation and its institutionalisation in the educational system of the country.

Case studies

This section presents a few studies.

The case of Mal Mazou (2015)

The objective of this study, titled "*Le passé, le présent et l'avenir de la traduction au Cameroun*" (The past, the present and the future of translation in Cameroon), was to discuss the development of translation in Cameroon since independence and to make suggestions for the future of the profession in this country where bilingualism is institutional and where, on a daily basis, about 300 languages interact. This study looks like a historical account and focuses on training offers in translation and interpretation in Cameroon. The study presents the admission conditions and courses taught in major training schools in Cameroon, precisely the Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters (ASTI) of the University of Buea, the Higher Institute of Translation, Interpreting and Communication (ISTIC), which is under the academic supervision of the University of Buea and the Department of Bilingual Studies of the University of Yaoundé I. The author alleges, without making concrete proposals and without focusing particularly on sight translation, that ASTI and ISTIC need to reconsider their training programmes due to developments in the profession.

The case of Afolabi (2014)

Having noticed a lack of adequate training in translation and in interpreting in most of the universities in Nigeria, the author undertook to investigate the immediate and root causes and to analyse the negative effects on the future of French studies (particularly in translation and

interpretation) in faculties to propose some measures that could promote or improve the training in translation and in interpretation in Nigerian universities. The goal of such endeavour is to produce future specialists/professionals in this field. The author focuses first on the Master and Doctorate training programme offers in the Department of French Language Studies of Nigerian universities in November 2012. It appears that only 5 of 16 departments of French Studies have a Master in Translation programme, which, moreover, is not a Master in Translation but rather, a Master in French with one or two courses in translation. Additionally, only 2 of 16 departments that were investigated offer a Doctorate programme in translation, which is not a PhD in Translation. The author explains the discrepancy of trainings in translation and interpretation in Nigeria by the lack of specialists in the fields in numerous training programmes and the lack of political will. In fact, a questionnaire issued to 178 teachers in 16 departments revealed that 102 of the 178 departments are specialists in literature; 42 are language specialists; 30 are translation specialists and most of them only at the Master level, as they do not hold a PhD in Translation. The author, moreover, discovered the presence of teachers in translation who did neither have a master's degree nor a Doctorate. Regarding interpretation, none of the 173 lecturers of the 16 departments interviewed had a Master or a Doctorate in interpretation. The author emphasises that some teachers learned interpreting by doing. The author made palliative proposals. It would be necessary, according to him, to "focus on a solid, adequate, targeted and professional training". He advocates, moreover, for the creation of Master in Translation and a PhD in Translation programmes, which will enable succession in the teaching staff. It is important to note that the author does not mention an interpretation training programme in his proposals.

Research on sight translation and implications for interpreter training

This section presents other relevant research conducted on sight translation as part of interpreter training.

Relevance of sight translation for interpreter training

The series of trainings conducted by Sampaio (2014) on students in a Bachelor's programme in Sao Paulo aimed, firstly, at investigating the role of sight translation in improving the skills of translators and interpreters, the various approaches of the teaching methods of sight translation and ultimately, the relevance of sight translation in the professional life of translators and interpreters. Sampaio proceeded in two series of investigations with the first from 2007 to 2008 consisting

in two sub-projects on sight translation by student translators and interpreters. The second series was conducted by trainers (sub-project 3) from 2008 to 2009 and by professional translators and interpreters as part of sub-project 4, from 2009 to 2010. Sub-projects 3 and 4 in which we are more interested, focused on the relevance of sight translation for future interpreters and translators as well as the circumstances under which sight translation is important, by interviewing five experienced teachers. All the respondents, in sub-project 3, found sight translation relevant in the interpreter and translator training for reasons of skills. Moreover, 80% of the respondents said that sight translation skills are of paramount importance in the translation and interpretation market and 20% thought that sight translation is relatively important. As for sub-project 4, seven professional translators and interpreters took part in the study. The questions focused on their level of familiarity with sight translation as well as its regularity and relevance in their professional life, professional circumstances in which sight translation is practised, the type of texts (documents) they encountered and finally the need to include sight translation in the training programmes. The results revealed that 86% of the respondents frequently practise sight translation in the professional environment, 14% said that they practised sight translation while performing simultaneous interpreting (simultaneous with text) and 14% responded that they did not practise sight translation that frequently. As far as the practice circumstances are concerned, 67% of the respondents mentioned conferences; 33% legal contexts or interpreting in tribunals. Ultimately, regarding the importance of sight translation in the training programmes, all the respondents were unanimous about the need to include it in training programmes.

Sight translation skills transfer in simultaneous interpreting

Song (2010) conducted a study on the transfer of sight translation skills to simultaneous interpreting. The study also focused on a third type of sight translation, which is hybrid through a Power Point presentation, by playing a text which can be seen from inside the interpreting booths and interpreted. Having lamented the dearth of literature on the transfer of sight translation skills to simultaneous interpreting, the author also emphasises the dearth of research on the ways to acquire these skills deliberately to succeed in such transfer. After presenting the pedagogical values of sight translation in the development of simultaneous interpreting, the author discusses the types of sight translation as presented by Lambert (2004) i.e. the more stressful sight translation (without preparation or reading the text) and the less stressful sight translation (with preparation and reading). For the latter, the author emphasises that it is difficult to

assess and to check whether the final result was obtained by skills that the participants developed or by a contextual knowledge. Moreover, as part of the sight translation skills transfer to simultaneous interpreting, the author states that this type of sight translation does not contribute to the development of additional skills and strategies required to process information of a simultaneous nature. At the end of the study, Song concludes that the major issue in transferring sight translation skills to simultaneous is not the fundamental difference of the two elements (sight translation and simultaneous interpreting) but the static nature of sight translation. His method consisted in manipulating text to give sight translation a simultaneous nature.

Designing a sight translation course

Li (2015) used the course design model by Graves (2000) consisting in five steps including context, articulating beliefs, conceptualising content, formulating objectives and goals, organising the course, developing materials, creating an assessment system. The purpose of the article was to incite the trainers to develop sight translation courses and other translation and interpretation courses in a scientific and systematic manner. Then, by referring to the Graves's model, the author presents the importance of context in developing a course. As a matter of fact, the more the context is known, the easier the decisions on what to teach and how to do so. The theoretical framework to design sight translation course following Graves's model has three phases, notably designing the course, delivering the course and reviewing it for a new design. As for sight translation course design, the contextual factors, according to the author, are the social context, the nature of the course and the institution, the resources to teach and the students. The next step in the design is articulating beliefs, which deals, more specifically, with the social context, the learners and learning as well as the teaching. Contextualising the content consists in categorising, prioritising and organising the content. As far as goals (more global than objectives) are concerned, the sight translation course destinations should be determined while the objectives are the various elements leading to these destinations. Finally, organisation being the last element of a course organisation process, the author suggests that the course be organised in modules of competence and level of complexity.

Sight translation seen by authors in the training of interpreters

In this section, proposals made by authors to improve students' sight translation skills are presented.

The objective of Krapivkina (2018) in her study was to explore difficulties that students had in sight translation and to make proposals to remedy them. In fact, sight translation is perceived as more demanding than any other interpreting mode (Stanfield, 2008) because it involves a written speech to be rendered in an oral production, sometimes without prior exploration of the document. This research employed a descriptive analysis using an evaluation questionnaire issued to teachers and a self-evaluation questionnaire addressed to students in final year in a university in Russia. The students were asked questions about their capacity to translate the text given to them within allocated time, their capacity to produce a fluent speech without any hesitation, their capacity to respect the grammatical order of the source text, their capacity to face difficult words or new words, to avoid a literal/verbal translation, to consistently render the text, to auto correct, to summarise the source text, to comply with language register and genre conventions and on public speaking. Reading as an exercise aims at increasing the reading speed of the students, reducing the rendition time while sight translating by synchronising the reading and production at the same time. Reading is believed to enable students to develop their understanding skills.

As regards analytical and logical skills development, the author suggested that the students could analyse the text in detail and try to analyse it before translating (type of text, type of information contained in the text, its structure, the analytical intention and structure). The exercise could also consist in analysing the context, the goal and theme of the text, the cultural and social elements that are relevant for the translation. Ultimately, this exercise will enable the students to develop the capacity to analyse sentence structures and to reformulate in the target language.

Regarding the linguistic complexity, the major problem at this level is new words or difficult words. The exercise will therefore enable students to develop strategies to cope with these specific language problems. They could, for example, guess the meaning of an unknown word in accordance with the context, or they could grasp the meaning as a whole rather than just focus on words. Moreover, the exercise will enable the students to develop their capacity to freely express ideas in the target language through synonyms.

Finally, the public speaking exercise will enable the students, among others, to pay attention to their facial expressions as well as their posture while sight translating. In this regard, as exercise, the students can read text excerpts loudly, record themselves and listen to themselves. During the sight translation exercise, the students must pay attention to their voice, intonation, tone, hesitations, signs, projection, enunciation and their posture. They are expected to be able to express themselves in front of a group of people.

The author concludes by recommending that these

aspects of sight translation be considered during training: clear and fluent rendition, consistency of speech, factual and linguistic precision, respect of the genre and register, adequate speaking speed, appropriate tone, volume, voice projection. Ultimately, the author recommends that sight translation be taught to students separately from other interpreting modes due to the difference of skills.

METHODOLOGY

In this section, approaches, methods and instruments used in this research will be presented.

Research design

This research aimed at determining the place that sight translation occupies in the professional practice of interpreters who graduated from ASTI and the relevance of the subject in the training programme. In this regard, a mixed approach or hybrid approach (Fielding, 2001) was used.

Quantitative data were collected thanks to a questionnaire administered to a target population made of conference interpreters trained in ASTI while qualitative data were gathered from the analysis of documents of the programme archives: course descriptions, timetables, comprehensive training programmes of ASTI.

Sample size

The sample was made up of twenty-nine (29) interpreters who graduated from ASTI between 2008 and 2015. As a matter of fact, the last programme redesign in ASTI, as a result of the Bologna process, was implemented in 2008. The limitation to 2015 is explained by the fact that with the study being conducted in 2019, students admitted in 2015 and who normally graduated in 2017, were able to discover the realities of the profession and already have a certain practical professional experience.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire containing closed questions or open questions was issued to the twenty-nine respondents who graduated from ASTI between 2008 and 2015. The questionnaire was first designed on Word, a word processing software which is part of the Microsoft Suite, and later transposed to Google Forms. Four major platforms were used to distribute the said questionnaire: email address, WhatsApp, LinkedIn and Facebook platforms.

Questionnaire structure

Regarding the questionnaire structure, there are 5 major parts and 11 questions. The content and the number of questions of each subset vary according to the objectives of each sub-set. Among the 11 questions, 10 are closed questions and 1 is the only open question. The parts of the questionnaire are as follows:

Part 1: Information on the respondents

In this part, the respondents provided their year of entry and year of graduation.

Part 2: The respondents' studies at ASTI

The second part of the questionnaire deals with the respondents' studies at ASTI. The respondents were to provide information about the practice and the importance of sight translation during their training.

Part 3: Sight translation in ASTI

The third part of the questionnaire was about sight translation in ASTI i.e. the place of sight translation in the programmes and what the respondents think about it.

Part 4: Professional activities of the respondents

The fourth part of the questionnaire focused on the professional activities of the respondents: countries where they work, how frequent they practised sight translation since graduation from the training, circumstances under which they performed sight translation.

Part 5: Importance of sight translation in the training programme

The last part of the questionnaire deals with the importance of sight translation in training programmes: what the respondents think of sight translation, in light of their professional experience.

New input mask and variables

The questionnaire was initially designed using Google Forms and sent out. The data were collected online using Google Forms. Due to the multiple-choice questions inadequately represented in the responses from the Google Forms, it was necessary to design a new mask of input with EpiData Version 3.1 (EpiData Association, Odense Denmark, 2008). Some variables precisely multiple-choice questions were therefore input again while making sure that the identification codes of participants are thoroughly preserved in order to ensure link with the original database. The data were then cleaned up with SPSS software, Version 221 (IBM Inc., 2012) according to the Nana's proposed procedures for categorical data analysis (2018). The variables were thereafter described and statistics presented in the form of frequencies and percentages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the study and the

Table 1. Year of entry of ASTI student interpreters

Year when the student was admitted in ASTI	Number of respondents	Percentage
2008	3	10.3
2009	3	10.3
2010	6	20.7
2011	6	20.7
2012	3	10.3
2013	1	3.4
2014	2	6.9
2015	5	17.2
Total	29	100.0

Table 2. Practice of sight translation during the training

Number	Percentage
29	100.0

discussion that they entail. The data are presented in tables, graphics and comments.

Questionnaire

Table 1 presents the year of entry of the 29 interpreters who made up the sample.

The respondents' studies at ASTI

a. Sight translation practice during the training

Table 2 summarises the responses to the question on whether the respondents practised sight translation during their training.

b. Importance of sight translation for the training

82.8% i.e. 24 respondents out of 29 thought that sight translation contributes to mental agility. Then, of the 29 respondents, 51.5% i.e. 15 respondents think that sight translation contributes in consolidating skills. Twelve respondents (12) i.e. 62.1% find that sight translation, during their training, contributed to anticipation. Moreover, 12 respondents i.e. 41.4% think that sight translation facilitates public speaking. Ultimately, 58.6% of the 29 respondents i.e. 17 respondents think that sight translation contributes to information processing. Figure 1 summarizes the responses provided by the respondents.

Sight translation at ASTI

This part of the questionnaire aimed at knowing the

respondents' perception of the hourly volume of sight translation. In fact, they were reminded that sight translation at ASTI is allocated 60 hours per semester on a total of 300 hours i.e. 30 hours per language combination (French A/English B and English A/French B). Sight translation accounts for 20% of all the hourly volume of the first semester and 18.75% of the second semester. The respondents were to give their opinion about the hourly volume, whether "**Very sufficient**", "**Insufficient**", "**Sufficient**", "**Very insufficient**". It appears that 13.8% of the respondents i.e. 4 respondents, think that sight translation's volume is very sufficient. Then, 27.6% of the respondents i.e. 8 respondents of the 29, think that sight translation's volume is insufficient. However, 58.6% of the respondents i.e. 17 respondents, think that sight translation's volume is sufficient. No respondent found that the hourly volume allocated to sight translation is very insufficient. Figure 2 presents the perception that the respondents have of sight translation.

Professional activities of the respondents

This 4th part of the questionnaire sought to determine the place of sight translation in the professional practice of interpreters who graduated from ASTI between 2008 and 2015. In this regard, open and closed questions were asked, notably about their practice of sight translation in professional settings since their graduation from ASTI, the circumstances under which they practised it and the frequency of practice in professional environments.

Professional activities of the respondents

The data in this section aim at highlighting the place of

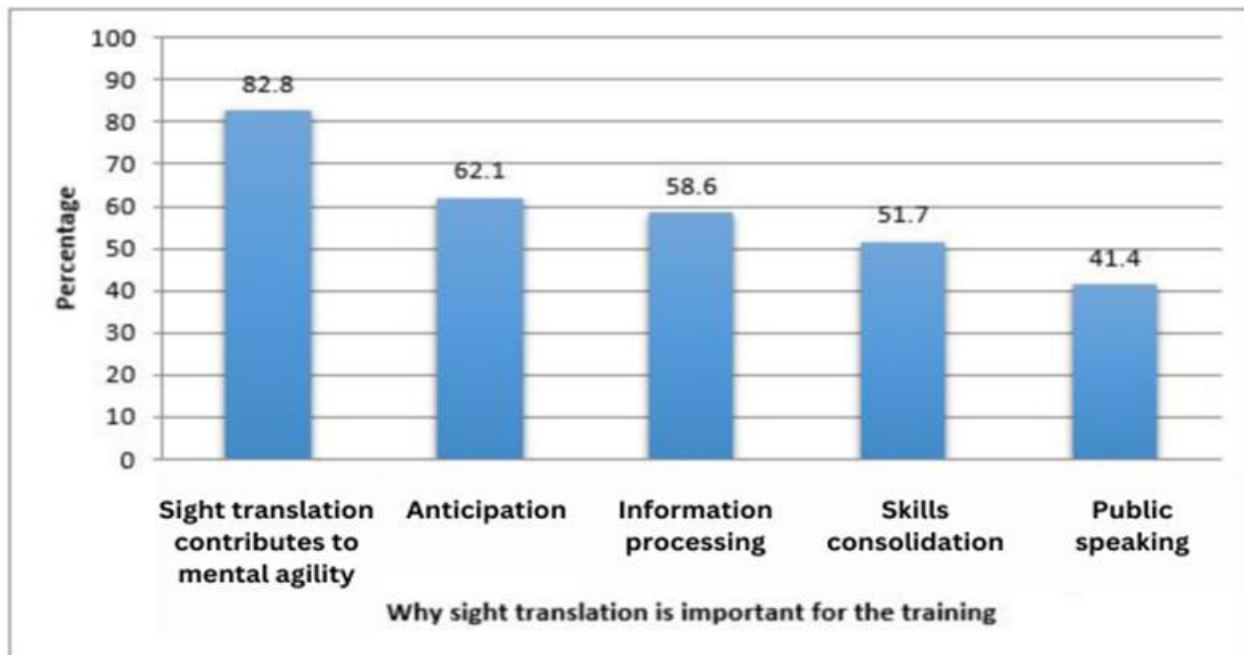


Figure 1. Why sight translation is important for the training

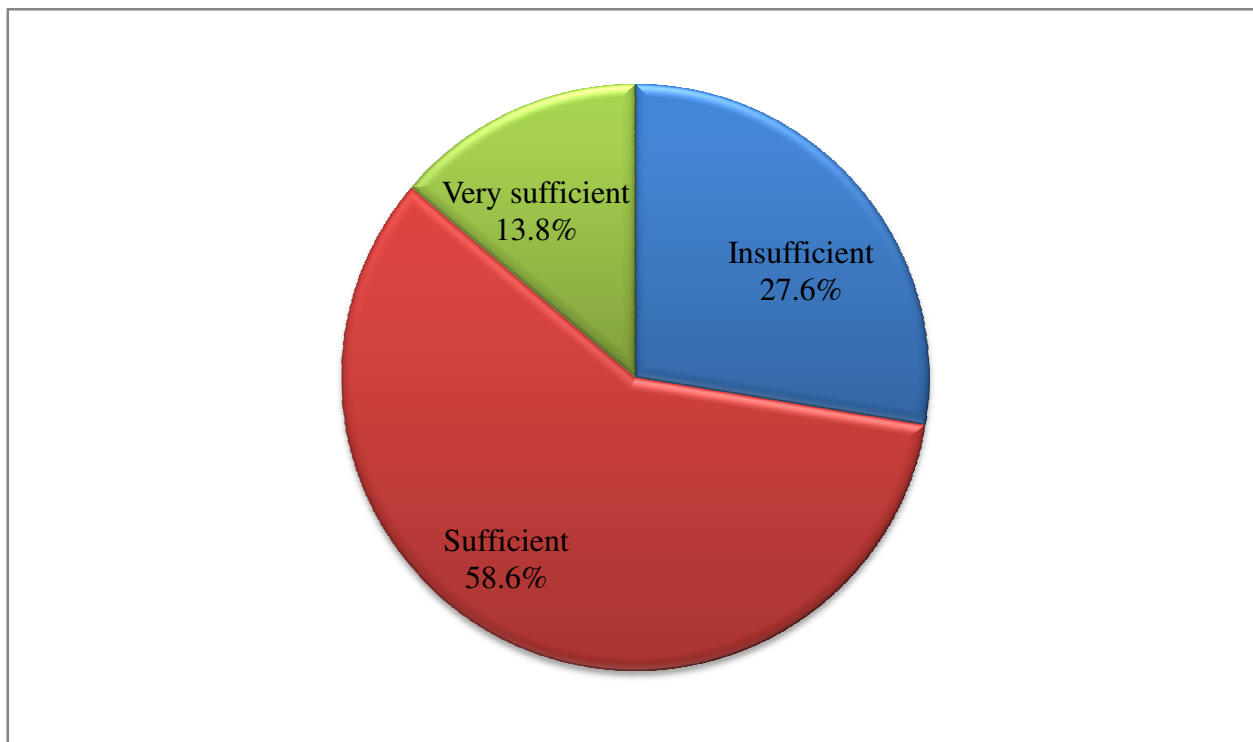


Figure 2. How sight translation's hourly volume is perceived in the training.

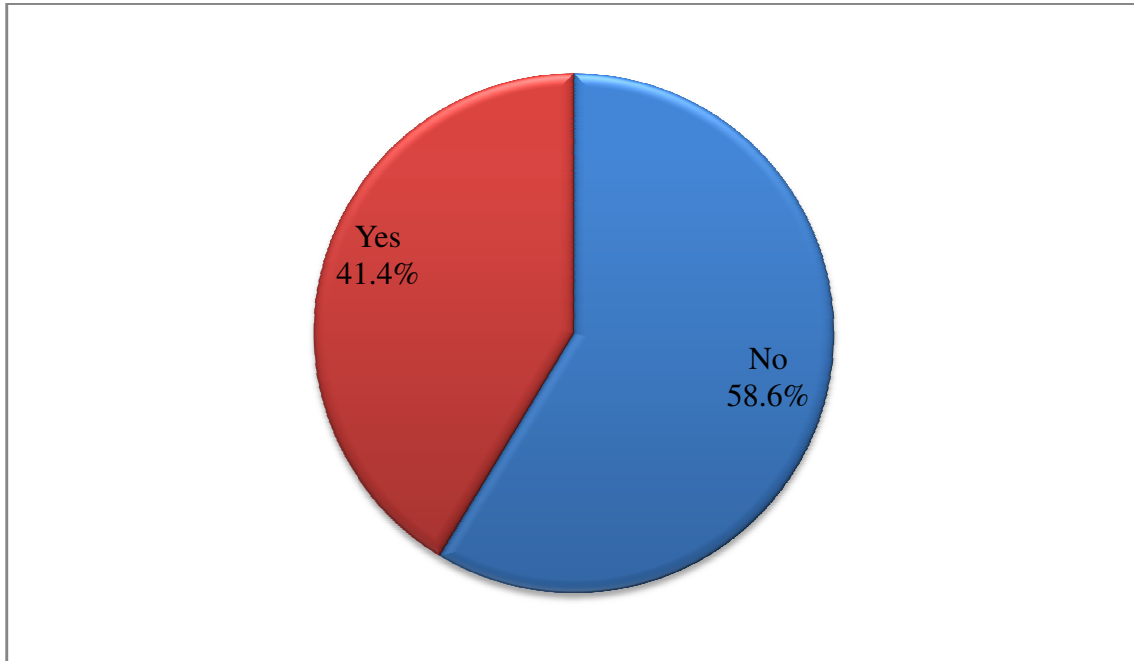


Figure 3. Do you work only in Cameroon?

Table 3. Countries other than Cameroon where the respondents also work

Countries	Number of respondents	Percentage
Brazil	1	4.8
Burundi	1	4.8
Canada	1	4.8
Central African Republic	1	4.8
Chad	4	19.0
Congo Brazzaville	1	4.8
Côte d'Ivoire	1	4.8
Democratic Republic of Congo	4	19.0
Equatorial Guinea	1	4.8
Gabon	3	14.0
Germany	1	4.8
Morocco	1	4.8
United States of America	1	4.8
Total	21	100.0

sight translation in the professional activities of the ASTI graduate interpreters between 2008 and 2015. Closed and open questions were asked to the 29 respondents.

As a matter of fact, one question sought to find out if they worked only in Cameroon. 41.4% of the respondents work only in Cameroon against 58.6% who also work in other countries than Cameroon. Figure 3 represents these data in percentage.

The respondents, who work in other countries outside Cameroon, had the opportunity to specify these countries through an open question. The 58.6% of the respondents mentioned above worked in countries such as Brazil (4.8%), Burundi (4.8%), Canada (4.8%), Central African

Republic (4.8%), Chad (19.0%), Congo Brazzaville (4.8%), Côte d'Ivoire (4.8%), Democratic Republic of Congo (19.0%), Equatorial Guinea (4.8%), Gabon (14.0%), Germany (4.8%), Morocco (4.8%), United States of America (4.8%), as shown in Table 3 which presents the data in number of respondents and percentage.

Sight translation in the professional setting

The respondents were asked a closed question to find out whether they practised sight translation in the

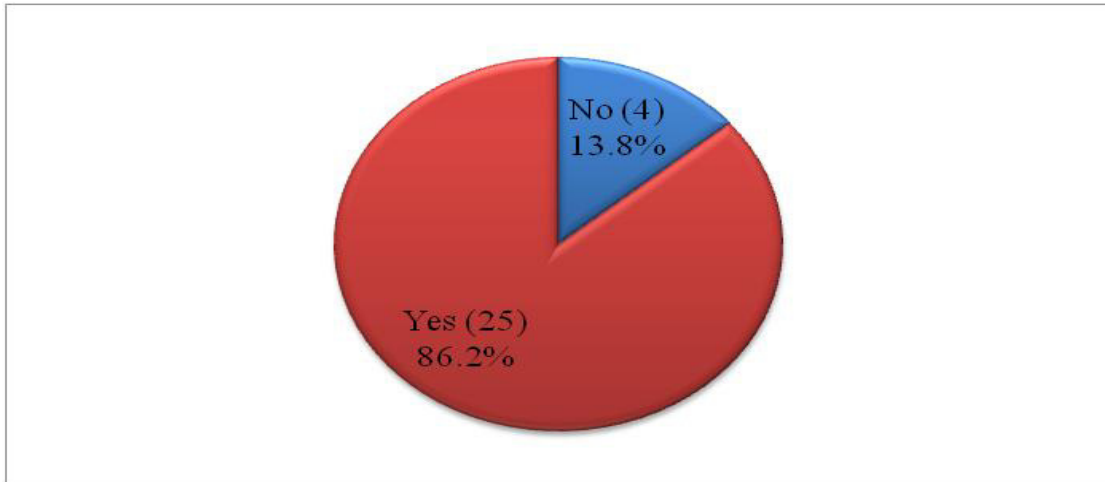


Figure 4. The practice of sight translation in the professional setting.

Table 4. Circumstances in which the respondents practised sight translation

Circumstances	Number of respondents	%
Help a participant	13	52.0
When a speaker is fast and that I can read their presentation	15	60.0
When a boss asks for help	14	56.0

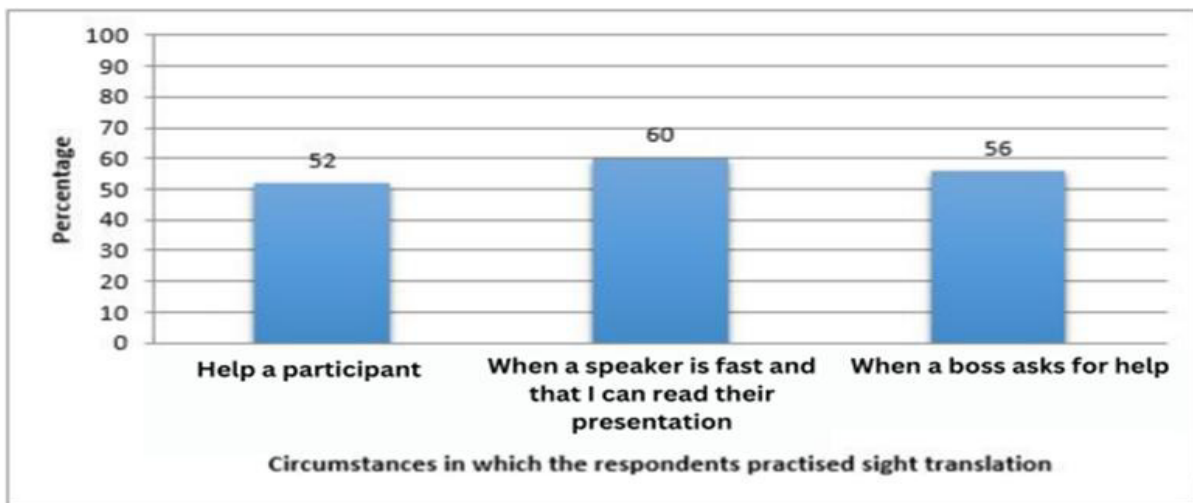


Figure 5. Circumstances in which the respondents practised sight translation

professional setting since they graduated from ASTI. To this question, 86.2% i.e. 25 respondents answered "Yes" while 13.8% i.e. 4 respondents answered "No".

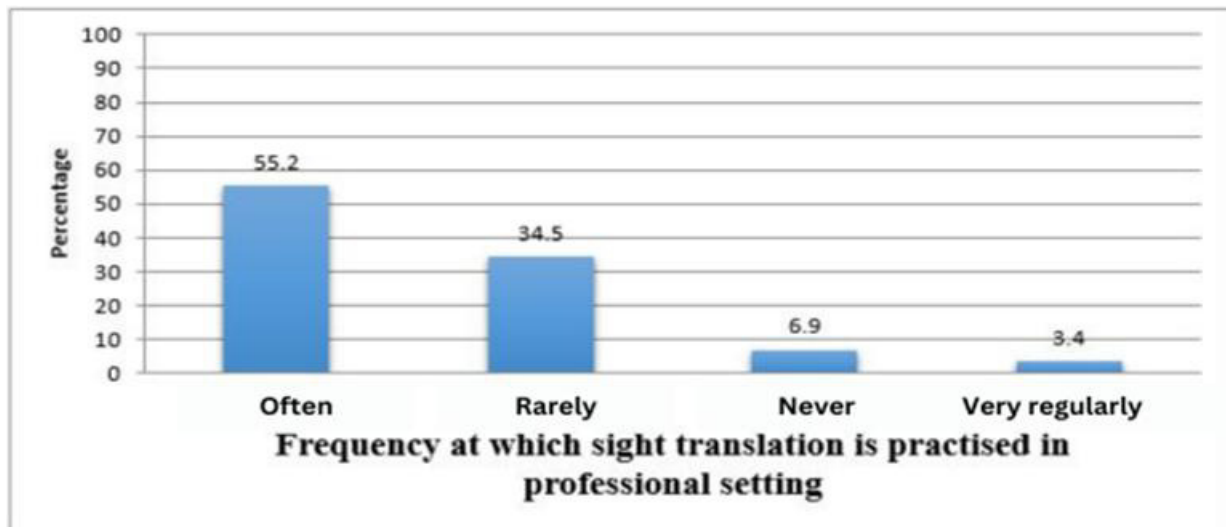
Circumstances in which the respondents practised sight translation

The respondents were asked about the circumstances in which they practised sight translation after they graduated and they had the following options: "Help a

participant", "When a speaker is fast and I can read their presentation", "When a boss asks for help". On the 29 respondents, 13 respondents i.e. 52% practised sight translation to help a participant. Fifteen respondents of the 29 i.e. 60% practised it when a speaker was fast and that they could read their presentation. Ultimately, 14 respondents of the 29 i.e. 56% practised sight translation when a boss asked for assistance. Table 4 and Figure 5 represent these data in number of respondents and in percentage.

Table 5. Sight translation practice frequency in professional setting

Sight translation practice frequency	Number of respondents	Percentage
Never	2	6.9
Rarely	10	34.5
Often	16	55.2
Very regularly	1	3.4
Total	29	100.0

**Figure 6.** Sight translation practice frequency in professional setting

Frequency of sight translation practice in the professional setting

The respondents were asked a closed question to find out at what frequency they practised sight translation in the professional setting. The options that were presented to them are: "**Never**", "**Rarely**", "**Often**" and "**Very regularly**". As a matter of fact, 2 respondents i.e. 6.9% never practised sight translation. Ten (10) respondents i.e. 34.5% rarely practised it. Sixteen (16) respondents i.e. 55.2% practised it often. One respondent i.e. 3.4% practised sight translation very regularly.

Importance of sight translation in the training programme

The respondents were asked a closed question to find out whether "**Sight translation must be maintained in the programmes**", whether "**Its hourly volume must be reduced**" or "**Its hourly volume must be increased**". Considering their professional experience and the frequency at which the respondents practise sight translation, twenty-five (25) respondents of the 29 i.e. 86.2% found that sight translation must be maintained in the interpreter training programme of ASTI. Only two

respondents i.e. 6.9% thought that the hourly volume of sight translation must be reduced. Twelve respondents i.e. 41.4% thought that the hourly volume of sight translation must be increased.

Data interpretation

In this section, the data presented and analysed above will be interpreted.

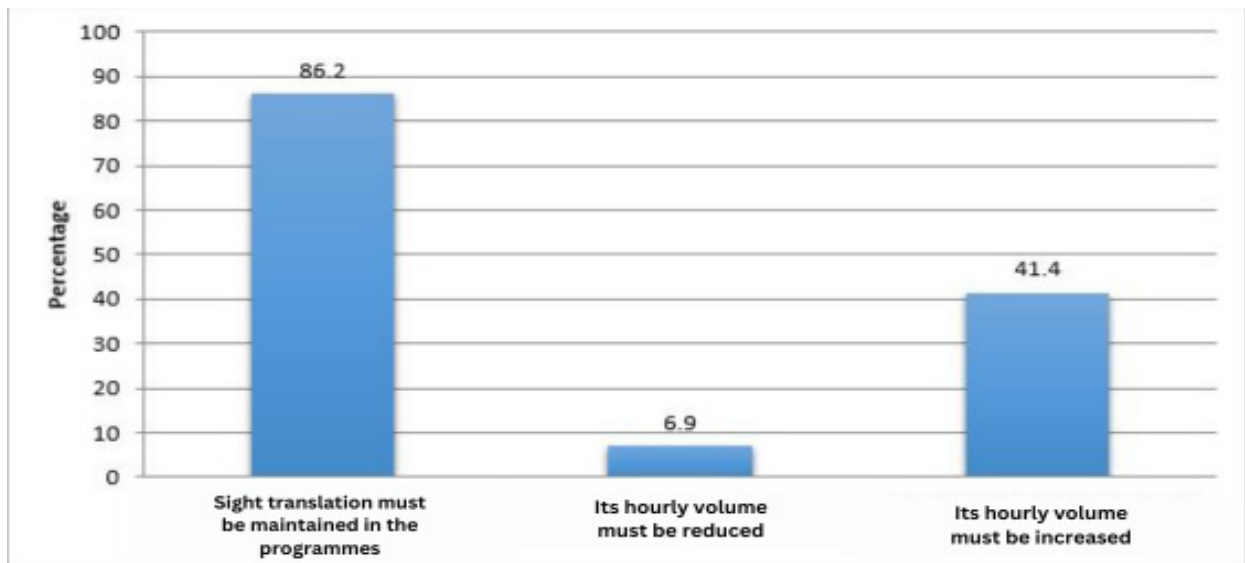
Sight translation in the professional practice of ASTI graduate interpreters

The practice of a subject by the products of a training programme is supposed to inform the said programme. In other words, the training programmes are designed based on the demand and the actors in the market. Therefore, whether sight translation is frequently practised by conference interpreters trained at ASTI between 2008 and 2015, the data collected with the respondents confirm the frequent practice of sight translation in the professional setting.

Regarding the importance of sight translation during the training and before the products graduate, all the

Table 6. The respondents' opinions on maintaining or reducing the hourly volume of sight translation

Considering your professional experience and the frequency at which you practise sight translation, what do you think about the subject?	Number of respondents	%
Sight translation must be maintained in the programmes	25	86.2
Its hourly volume must be reduced	2	6.9
Its hourly volume must be increased	12	41.4

**Figure 7.** The respondents' opinions on maintaining or reducing the hourly volume of sight translation

respondents said that they practised sight translation during the training. Sight translation is important to them as it contributes to mental agility (according to 82.8% of the respondents), to skills consolidation (51.7%), to anticipation (62.1%), to public speaking (41.4%) and to information processing (58.6%).

The countries where the respondents work were important due to their exposure to other environments and experiences. 58.6% of the 29 respondents said that they do not work only in Cameroon. These respondents work or have worked in other African countries and in European and North American countries, while 41.4% said that they work only in Cameroon. What about sight translation practice after graduating from the training school?

A large majority of the respondents practised sight translation since they graduated from the training. They are 86.2% of the 29 respondents and a low percentage (13.8%) did not practise it. Moreover, the 86.2% of the respondents practised it in various circumstances. Some of the respondents practised sight translation to help a participant (48% of the respondents) while others practised it when facing a fast speaker and they could read the speaker's presentation (60% of the respondents). Of the 29 respondents, 56% practised sight

translation when a boss needed help.

As far as the practice frequency is concerned, the data collected are interesting as a good majority of the respondents i.e. 55.2% "often" practise sight translation. Only 3.4% of the respondents practise it "very regularly" and 6.9% "never" practised it. However, 34.5% of the respondents practise it "rarely". These data provide sufficient evidence about the frequent practice of sight translation by ASTI graduate interpreters in professional settings. But is this practice in the professional setting in line with the hourly volume allocated to the subject in the training programme?

Consistency of sight translation's place in the programme with its place in the professional activities of the graduates

The objective here is to determine the level of consistency of the place of sight translation's practice by ASTI graduate interpreters and the place it occupies in the school's programmes.

In fact, sight translation in ASTI is allocated 60 hours per semester on a total of 300 hours for all the semester; which accounts for 30 hours per language combination

(French -- English). Sight translation accounts for 20% of all the hourly volume of the first semester and 18.75% of the second semester. 58.6% of the respondents find that this hourly volume is "sufficient" and 27.6% found that it is "insufficient". Of the 29 respondents, 13.8% found that the volume is "very sufficient" and finally, no respondent found that the hourly volume is "very insufficient".

The consistency or inconsistency of sight translation in the programmes as compared with the place it occupies in professional settings is assessed by the hourly volume in the programmes, the frequency of practice and what the respondents think. Considering their professional experience and the frequency at which they practise sight translation, the respondents expressed themselves on the importance of sight translation in the training programme, whether it should be maintained or removed or its hourly volume reduced or increased.

On the 29 respondents, 86.2% find that sight translation must be maintained in the training programmes and 41.4% think that its hourly volume must be increased. Only 6.9% think that its hourly volume must be reduced and no respondent found that sight translation should be removed from the training programmes.

The majority of the respondents who are in favour of keeping sight translation in the programmes show the consistency of sight translation's presence in the programmes and its practice in the market. The inconsistency is noticed with the hourly volume, which must be increased according to 41.4% of the respondents. This number of respondents is not insignificant. As a reminder, 58.6% find that the sight translation's volume at ASTI is sufficient while, out of the 29 respondents, 27.6% think that the hourly volume is insufficient.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed at determining sight translation's place in the professional practice of ASTI graduates between 2008 and 2015 and establishing a consistency between this place and the importance that is given to this subject in the interpreter training programme of ASTI. At the end of the study and on the basis of the investigation result analysis, the following recommendations can be made, hoping that they will contribute to improving the training in interpretation at ASTI in Cameroon and in Africa:

- Maintain sight translation in the training programme the way it is already in the programme;
- Wherever it is, increase the hourly volume of sight translation from 20% to 25% of the overall hourly volume of the semester;
- Add sight translation in the first semester of the second year of the Master programme and give it the same hourly percentage as above;

In an African context sometimes criticised for giving "too much place and importance" (verbal exchange with Fiona Cabassut on a pedagogical visit at ASTI in March 2017)

to sight translation in the training programmes, the study enabled to shed light on the practice frequency of this activity in the professional life and therefore, to justify, empirically, the relevance not only of the subject but also of its hourly weight in the programme. It moreover suggests that its hourly volume be increased and that the subject be taught in three semesters on four instead of two as is currently the case. These results may also be used as part of a possible redesign of interpretation training programmes. The study finally opens research perspectives centred on the objective to create synergies between training-research and professional practice in order for the former to inform the latter about its results and for the latter to inform the former about their own realities for a regular update of training programmes.

REFERENCES

- Abdikali, B. (n.d.). *What is learning from practice and reflection*. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/7579241/What_is_learning_from_practice_and_reflection
- Afolabi, O. (2018). *Analyse des besoins du marché de la traduction et de l'interprétation : vers l'optimisation de la formation des traducteurs et interprètes professionnels au Nigéria*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.
- Afolabi, S. (2016). Le marché de traduction au Nigéria et au Canada : une enquête comparative. *Belas Infiéis*, 5.
- Aire, V. (2014). Les études franco-africaines au Canada : un témoignage personnalisé. Article non publié présenté lors du 15^e congrès annuel de l'Association nigériane des enseignants universitaires de français (ANEUF), tenu à Ile-Ife du 9 au 14 mars 2014
- Akbari, A. (2017). Needed Skills and Strategies to Improve the Efficiency of Sight Translation in Classroom Context. *Trans-kom*, 10, 22-44.
- Ball, D. L. and Cohen, D. K. (1999). Developing practice, developing practitioners: Toward a practice-based theory of professional education. Darling-Hammond, L. and Sykes, G. (eds.) *Teaching as the Learning Profession: Handbook of Policy and Practice*, 3-32. New York: Jossey-Bass.
- Biela-Wolonciej, A. (2007). A-Vista: New Challenges for Tailor-Made Translation Types on the Example of Recorded Sight Translation. *Kalbotyra*, 57(3), 30-39.
- Dragsted, B. and Hansen, I. (2009). *Exploring Translation and Interpreting Hybrids. The Case of Sight Translation*. *Meta*, 54 (3), 588-604.
- Durieux, C. (2005). *L'enseignement de la traduction : enjeux et démarches*. *Meta*, 50, (1), 36-47.
- Fielding, M. (2001). Students as Radical Agents of Change. *Journal of Educational Change*, 2, 123-141.
- Fiona Cabassut, visite pédagogique à l'ASTI, mars 2017 (échange verbal).
- Giles, D. (2009). *Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training*. Revised Edition. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Graves, K. (2000). *Designing language courses: A guide for teachers*. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.
- Jiménez, I. (2001). La Traducción a la Vista: Repaso Bibliográfico [Sight Translation: A Bibliographical Review]. *Sendeban* Vol. 12, 35-64
- Kiraly, Don (2005). Project-Based Learning: A Case for Situated Translation. *Meta*, 50, (4), 1098-1111.

- Krapivkina, O. (2018). *Sight translation and its status in training of interpreters and translators*. London: Routledge.
- Lambert, S. (2004). Shared Attention during Sight Translation, Sight Interpretation and Simultaneous Interpretation. *Meta*, 49 (2), 294–306.
- Lee, J. (2008). *Rating Scales for Interpreting Performance Assessment*. Paris: Guilford Press.
- Li, X. (2015). Designing a sight translation course for undergraduate T&I students: From context definition to course organization. *Revista Espanola de Linguistica Aplicada*. 28. 169-198. 10.1075/resla.28.1.08li.
- Mal Mazou, O. (2015). Le passé, le présent et l'avenir de la traduction au Cameroun. *Meta*, 60(2), 354–354. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1032905ar>
- Middlebury Institute of International Studies (MIIS) (n.d.). Conference Interpretation Sample Course Schedule, Monterey, California, USA: <https://www.middlebury.edu/institute/academics/degree-programs/translation-interpretation/curriculum#ci> consulted on 20 April 2019.
- Mikkelsen, H. (1994). Text Analysis Exercises for Sight Translation. In: Peter, W. (ed) *Vistas: Proceedings of the 31st Annual Conference of ATA*. NJ: Learned Information. 381–390.
- Nana, C. (2018). *Research methods and applied statistics: Beginners and advanced learners*. (3rd Edition). Buea: GOOAHEAD.
- Nzuanke S, Salaudeen, I. A. (2018). Vers une harmonisation des programmes de formation professionnelle des traducteurs dans le système universitaire nigérian, 3. 217-257.
- Sampaio, G. R. L. (2014). Tradução oral à Prima Vista: Pesquisa discente e implicações para a formação de intérpretes. *Tradterm*, 23, 121-139. <https://doi.org/10.11606/issn.2317-9511.tradterm.2014.85572>
- Seleskovitch, D. (1975). *Langage, langues et mémoire – Etude de la prise de notes en interprétation consécutive*. Paris: Minard lettres Modernes.
- Seleskovitch, D. (1983). Enseignement de la Traduction à Vue. *Revue de Phonétique Appliquée* No. 66. 165-168.
- Song, Z. (2010) "Skill Transfer from Sight Translation to Simultaneous Interpreting: A Case Study of an Effective Teaching Technique," *Int. J. Interpreter Edu*. Vol. 2: Iss. 1, Article 11.
- Stern, H. H. (1983). *Fundamental concepts of language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University.
- Stufflebeam, D. L. (1971). The Relevance of the CIPP Evaluation Model for Educational Accountability. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 5, 19-25.
- Tableau récapitulatif des enseignements (2016-17). Ecole Supérieure d'Interprètes et de Traducteurs (ESIT), Université Sorbonne Paris 3, France.