

Original Research Article

Appraising Media Interpreting Landscape in Cameroon

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Abstract

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This paper paints a picture of the media interpreting the landscape in Cameroon. To garner the needed data, research instruments such as documentary sources, and two sets of questionnaires – a set for media interpreters and the other for conference interpreters. The collected and analyzed data spawned the findings herein after. 1) There are many types of media interpreting practiced in Cameroon: conservative, semi-conservative, sight translation, simultaneous, signed language religious denomination. 2) A majority of media interpreters have mixed feelings about the practice of media interpreting in Cameroon. 3) Most media interpreters prefer recorded media interpreters to other types, and interpret ‘simultaneously’ without booths or equipment. 4) A good number of media interpreters leaves parts of discourse uninterpreted due to several reasons – lack of training, lack of preparation, technicality of domain, short notice, speaker’s speed, etc. 5) The most highlighted reason for leaving out parts of discourse uninterpreted is lack of training in the art of interpreting. 6) To salvage this seemingly ballpark situation and give a fillip to the media interpreting landscape in Cameroon, most conference interpreters, and media interpreters themselves recommend need for formal training or on-the-job training. Some conference interpreters recommend that only well trained professionals should be employed, and that journalists should acquire some interpretation skills.

Keywords: Media interpreting, (un)trained media interpreters, Media interpreting types, Uninterpreted discourse, voice-over, sight translation, semi-consecutive

INTRODUCTION

This article opens with the background to the study in order to set the stage. This is closely followed by a review of related literature that leads to the statement of the problem. The objectives are then stated and the methodology used to garner data outlined. The findings are then presented prior to their analysis and discussion before the curtains are drawn on the work.

Background to the Study

Looking at Cameroon’s colonial, historical, cultural and linguistic background, it is overtly established that it is a melting pot of a myriad of languages (Bilola 2004:1). In

effect, Cameroon first inherited the use of Portuguese and German prior to English and French that are the two official European-imported languages in use in Cameroon today. This situation is further confirmed in Ayonghe and Enow (2013:173) when both authors hold that “Cameroon is a multilingual country with people from different backgrounds with English and French as official languages. To the two languages mentioned above are added two widely spoken lingua francae, namely Cameroon Pidgin English and Camfranglais – spoken primarily among the youthful population in the country – and over 285 national languages spoken in several ethnic, linguistic and cultural communities in Cameroon (Bilola 2004:1).

With the multitude of widely spoken colonial languages and also national languages, and in a bid to meet up with diplomatic and inter-communication exigencies, the training of intercultural and interlingual communicators—translators and interpreters in Cameroon – became quite imperative. The training of students on translation and Interpreting programmes in Cameroon, for domestic and international markets, has been going on for over three decades as evidenced in the Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters (ASTI) of the University of Buea that was the very first institution to be created for this purpose in 1985.

Conference interpreting in general, more often than not, is a very highly strung profession and must warrant a long and continuous strain which is hard to bear (Herbert 1952:6); media interpreting, also called media discourse or media communication, is much more complex and pressure-bound.

This complexity is compounded by technological developments that surge regularly and periodically. Besides, the privatization and multiplicity of media houses in Cameroon; and the manner in which interpreting in such houses is done warrants that some study be carried out in this quite daunting field. Furthermore, the array of national languages is another challenging aspect to media interpreters, given the permanent quest for information dissemination to reach as many people as possible. Finally, the visually impaired community opens yet another real concern, though consciously or unconsciously ignored by media houses, that is begging for a solution.

It is against this backdrop, therefore, that this research is intended to describe media interpreting in Cameroon. Getting to identify from and into which languages media interpreting practice in Cameroon is done, how, where, by whom and for whom it is done is what this article seeks to investigate.

To conclude, media interpreting or mass multi-mediatc events research is still in its burgeoning or budding stages and so needs further or more research. This fact is stressed or underscored by Chiaro (2002:215) who declares that “multi-media translation in general is still in its early stages and within this field, very little research exists on TV interpreting”. It is therefore evident that media interpreting, especially its practice, needs to be investigated in Cameroon, especially considering the burgeoning state of this type of interpreting, scarcity or quasi-unavailability of literature on this form of interpreting in Cameroon.

Literature Review

Media Interpreting can be defined as a context-driven interpreting practice in which the communicative ethos of the broadcaster, the production conditions and the inherent features of the medium shape the interpretation

in terms of modality (consecutive, dialogue, simultaneous), interpreting broadcast output (live, recorded, edited, etc.) and the actual contents that require interpreting. This can much more lead to a broad range of practices and policies within broadcasting institutions that make media interpreting a highly complex field of study, especially as “media interpreting in live broadcasts is one of the more specialized forms of language transfer in the audio-visual media” (Pérez-González 2014:25). Such a ‘specialized form of language transfer’ calls for a tailored programme in order to ward off any misgivings about ‘a highly complex field of study’ like media interpreting.

Serrano (2011:217) reiterates the above point when he re-echoes some authors to describe the complex nature of media interpreting tasks: ‘translation doubly constrained’ and ‘a high-wire act’. Being a ‘different sort of world’, daring or risky job or exercise of interpreting would necessitate some investigation, especially considering the fact that it is still largely under-researched (idem: 204). Setton and Dawrant (2016:33) also hold the view that broadcast or media interpreting is a highly specialized, high-exposure branch of the profession.

Though arguably positive, Pérez-González (2014:25) shares Darwish’s (2010) stance that “the most popular type of media interpreting is television interpreting, also referred to as broadcast interpreting or telecast simultaneous interpreting. Interpretation scholars or practitioners intimate that conference interpreting and media interpreting are offshoots of the same profession. Although They are branches of the same field, they do differ in a number of aspects: stress level, audience size, approach, linguistic directionality, interpreting environment, visibility and of interpreter, stakeholders involved, equipment involved, interpreter status and time lag.

Statement of the Problem

With the background to this article depicted here in above, interpreting, especially media interpreting, has been practiced in Cameroon for quite a long time now. In spite of the presence of translation and interpretation training institutions like ASTI and others, a pilot study and participant observation have revealed that a lot of media ‘interpreters’ in Cameroon Interpret in ways that cast doubt on their training, if at all they ever underwent any requisite training. Such a state of affairs leaves one with the impression that such media ‘interpreters’ have a limited or approximate knowledge of what media interpreting is all about. In the same vein, and as a consequence of this seemingly ballpark knowledge of the art of media interpreting, there is an urgent need to identify and describe media interpreting types practiced in Cameroon, profile the interpreter involved and identify

challenges encountered and propose possible solutions to circumvent them.

Objectives of the Study

The article has three primary objectives: 1) identify and describe the various types of media interpreting practiced in Cameroon; 2) profile media interpreters in Cameroon; 3) identify and describe the challenges faced by media interpreters in Cameroon and to propose possible solutions to overcome them

METHODOLOGY

To gather the requisite data for this article, data were collected from various sources. The first source documentary – libraries and internet – that enable the researcher to track developments on media interpreting in and out of Cameroon. The second and more significant source are the two sets of questionnaires addressed to (1) conference interpreters and (2) media interpreters. The set of questionnaires addressed to conference interpreters was intended to elicit their view point on how media interpreters go about the job in Cameroon. Meanwhile the set of questions addressed to media interpreters ways to get the latter's description of how they do their work.

The thematic analysis approach was employed. This enabled the researcher to capture and summarize the respondents' opinions on thematic tables, using themes, groundings and some quotations as samples. This process was facilitated using Atlasti 3.0 which is an analytical tool/software designed for the management of qualitative data. The collected data were analyzed by using percentages and groundings. Frequency analysis was used for categorical variables so as to identify invalid entries and missing values. Findings were presented using frequency distribution tables and thematic tables.

FINDINGS

This section highlights some of the findings arrived at at the end of the research work.

- 1) There are many types of media interpreting practiced in Cameroon: conservative, semi-conservative, sight translation, simultaneous, sign language, religious denomination.
- 2) A majority of media interpreters have mixed feelings about the practice of media interpreting in Cameroon.
- 3) Most media media interpreters prefer recorded media interpreters to other types, and interpret 'simultaneously' without booths or equipment.
- 4) A good number of media interpreters leaves parts of discourse uninterpreted due to several reasons – lack of

training, lack of preparation, technicality of domain, short notice, speaker's speed, etc.

5) The most highlighted reason for leaving out parts of discourse is an uninterpreted lack of training in the art of interpreting.

6) To salvage this seemingly ballpark situation and give a fillip to the media interpreting landscape in Cameroon, most conference interpreters, and media interpreters themselves recommended for formal training or on-the-job training.

Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Media interpreting is one of the least researched, largely under-researched areas of interpreting in the world in general (Serrano 2002:204) and Cameroon in particular (Nama 1990:363; Gandu 2018:275; Azambou 2019:51-53). It is against this backdrop that this article seeks to depict a cursory picture of the media interpreting landscape in Cameroon. To achieve its objective, this article focuses on types of media interpreting practiced in Cameroon, the preferred type by media interpreters, the hurdles encountered, the causes of such setbacks, proposed solutions to overcome them so as to improve on media interpreting performance. Table 1

The findings showed that various types of media interpreting are practiced in Cameroon with voice over being dominant 49.1% followed by conservative 10.4%, semi-conservative 8.5%, sight translation 6.6%, reporting 4.7%, simultaneous 3.7%, sign language 2.8%, radio and TV 2.8%, religious denomination 1.9%, internet media interpreting 1.9%, conference interpreting 1.9%, interpretation of speeches 1.9% live broadcast 1.9% and press conference 1.9%. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there are many media interpreting types are practiced in Cameroon Including Voice over, sight translation, semi-conservative was accepted.

Table 2 above presents the conference interpreter's impression about media interpreting practice in Cameroon and findings show that a majority of them 24 (80.0%) have mixed impression (positive and negative while 6 (20.0%) of them have mainly positive impression. The mixed feeling is a pointer to a poor picture of the practice of media interpreting in Cameroon.

Table 3 above shows the distribution of untrained media interpreters by media interpreting, type of media interpreting they practice and their preferred type and, the findings show that a majority of them 24 (80.0%) do media interpreting simultaneously, hoping that they really understand what simultaneous interpreting is, considering that they do not usually have booths or equipment to interpret easily with, 4 (13.3%) are consecutively and 2 (6.7%) are sight translation.

Based on the type of media interpreting practiced, 15 (50.0%) of them practise recorded media interpreting and another 15 (50.0%) live media interpreting.

Table 1. Types of media interpreting practiced in Cameroon

Types of media interpreting practiced	Frequency	Percentage
Audio media interpreting/voice over	52	49.1
Consécutive	11	10.4
Semi-conservative	9	8.5
Sight Translation	7	6.6
Reporting	5	4.7
Simultaneous	4	3.7
Radio and TV	3	2.8
Sign Language	3	2.8
Internet media interpreting	2	1.9
Religious Denomination	2	1.9
Conference Interpreting	2	1.9
Interpretation of speeches	2	1.9
Live Broadcast	2	1.9
Press Conference	2	1.9
Total response count	106	100

Table 2. Conference Interpreters impression about media interpreting practice in Cameroon

Impression about media interpreting practice in Cameroon	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	6	20.0
Mixed (Positive and negative)	24	80.0
Total	30	100

Table 3. Distribution of untrained media interpreters as per media interpreting, type of media interpreting they practise and their preferred type

How do you practise media interpreting	Frequency (%)	Type of media interpreting practiced	Frequency (%)	Preferred type of media interpreting	Frequency (%)
Simultaneously	24 (80.0%)	Recorded media interpreting	15 (50.0%)	Recorded media interpreting	17(56.7%)
Consecutively	4 (13.3%)	Live media interpreting	15 (50.0%)	Live media interpreting	13(43.3%)
Sight translation	2 (6.7%)				
Total	30 (100%)	Total	30 (100%)	Total	30 (100%)

Table 4. Distribution of untrained media interpreters who leave part of speeches uninterpreted, frequency of such occurrences and the causes

Have you had instances where you left part(s) of a speech or discourse un-interpreted?	Frequency (%)	How frequent do you skip portions of speech /discourse while interpreting?	Frequency (%)	What is the cause?	Frequency (%)
Yes	25 (83.3%)	Very often	4 (13.3%)	Lack of preparation	10(33.3%)
No	5 (16.7%)	Often	9 (30.0%)	Short notification	3(10.0%)
		Seldom	17 (56.7%)	No prior notification	2(6.7%)
				Taken by surprise	7(23.3%)
				Lack of training	8(26.7%)
Total	30 (100%)	Total	30 (100%)	Total	30 (100%)

Finally, based on their preferred type of media interpreting, more than half of them 17 (56.7%) preferred recorded media interpreting and 13 (43.3%) preferred live media interpreting.

Table 4 above finds out if the untrained media interpreters left out part of speech or discourse uninterpreted, how often it occurs and the cause of it, findings show that a majority of them 25 (83.3%) agreed

Table 5. Comparing Untrained media interpreters leaving parts of speech or discourse interpreted as per key biographical data

Key biographical data		Have you had instances where you left part(s) of a speech or discourse uninterpreted?		Total	Chi-Square Test (χ^2)
		Yes	No		
Educational background	General	N	23	3	$\chi^2=3.692$ Df=1 P-value=0.055
		%	88.5%	11.5%	
	Science	N	2	2	
		%	50.0%	50.0%	
Highest qualification	M.A.	N	7	2	$\chi^2=10.160$ Df=2 P-value=0.006
		%	77.8%	22.2%	
	PhD	N	2	3	
		%	40.0%	60.0%	
	Bachelor's Degree	N	16	0	
		%	100.0%	0.0%	
Professional practice experience	0-5 years	%	13	5	$\chi^2=4.000$ Df=1 P-value=0.046
		N	72.2%	27.8%	
	Above 10 years	%	12	0	
		N	100.0%	0.0%	
Professional background	Trained as Translator	%	7	0	$\chi^2=1.826$ Df=1 P-value=0.177
		N	100.0%	0.0%	
	Trained as Journalist	%	18	5	
		N	78.3%	21.7%	

that they left part(s) of speech or discourse uninterpreted while 5 (16.7%) of them did not.

Based on how often such occurrences come up, findings show that 4 (13.3%) of them said very often, 9 (30.0%) of them said often and 17 (56.7%) of them said not often.

Based on the causes for leaving out part(s) of discourse or speech un-interpreted, findings show that 10 (33.3%) of the highlighted lack of preparation, 8 (26.7%) mentioned lack of training, 7 (23.3%) reiterated taken by surprise, and 3 (10.0%) and 2 (6.7%) of them respectively outlined short notification and no prior notification.

Table 5 above compares the untrained media interpreters leaving parts of speech uninterpreted as per key biographical data and, findings show a significant association with highest qualification ($P = 0.006 < 0.05$). By highest qualification, findings show that all of those with lower degree (Bachelor's Degree) (100%) were discovered to leave part(s) of speech uninterpreted, followed by those with Masters (77.8%) while more of those with PhD (60.0%) do not leave part(s) of speech un-interpreted.

However, it should be noted that untrained media interpreters, irrespective of educational background, professional years of practice and professional background, leave part(s) of speech un-interpreted; thus the dire need for formal training and attention to be paid to other causes leading to such a situation.

Table 6 below presents the reasons a majority of the untrained media interpreters 24 (80.0%) are not comfortable leaving part of speeches un-interpreted. One of the reasons they are uncomfortable is because the part of speeches left out were perceived as important as they said:

"Because Sometimes, what I leave out is important and this interrupts the message".

"Because the part of speeches left out might be very important".

Another reason why they are uncomfortable because they are passionate about their job as they stated:

"I love my job and I wish to deliver. But, when a speaker is too fast in the name of being under anointing, I cannot interpret faithfully".

Furthermore, their desire to be effective and efficient is another reason making them uncomfortable as they said:

"Because as an interpreter, one needs to give accurate information to listeners".

"This is because I have an audience to satisfy and I cannot be comfortable if the people listening to me are disappointed with my constant mistakes".

Findings equally show that some of them feel sad and disappointed as they said:

"Because I feel bad"

"I feel disappointed".

Finally, some of them said it is because they lack proper interpreting tools for the job, as they said;

Table 6. Why Untrained media interpreters are uncomfortable leaving part of speeches uninterpreted

Are you comfortable leaving part of speeches un-interpreted?	Reasons They are not comfortable leaving parts of speeches un-interpreted	
Yes 6(20.0%)	Themes	Quotations
	Part of speeches left out perceived as important	“Because Sometimes, what I leave out is important and this interrupts the message”. “Because the parts of speeches left out might be very important”.
	Passionate about the job	“I love my job and I wish to deliver. But, when a speaker is too fast in the name of being under anointing, I cannot interpret faithfully”.
	Desire to be effective and efficient	“Since training, I expect to do just the right thing. However, perfection is yet to come”.
No 24 (80.0%)	Desire to satisfy the listeners	“Because as an interpreter, one needs to give accurate information to listeners”. “This is because I have an audience to satisfy and I cannot be comfortable if the people listening to me are disappointed with my constant mistakes”. “Because I have the responsibility to satisfy the audience”.
	Feeling sad	“Because I feel bad” “I feel disappointed”.
	Lack of proper interpreting tools	“Lack of proper interpreting tools to be effective and efficient”.

Table 7. Remedies the untrained media interpreters stated to avoid leaving some part of speeches uninterpreted

Themes	Groundings	Quotations
Need for training	25	“Staff should undergo training in media interpretation”. “Improve on the training quality and increase entering criteria”. “The interpreters should be trained”. “Training is needed”. “Improve the quality of training for interpreters to match up with innovation”. “Reinforcement of training”. “Media owners should provide on the job training for the interpreters”.
Need for preparation	3	“Time should be given for preparation”. “Need for preparation”. “The interpreters should have time to prepare”.
Need for speakers to speak slowly	1	“Speakers should be brought to cooperate with media interpreters, share their messages and speak slowly”.

“Lack of proper interpreting tools to be effective and efficient”.

Table 7 above presents remedies the untrained media interpreters stated to avoid leaving some part of speeches un-interpreted.

The frequently mentioned remedy is that there is need for proper training, as a majority of them said:

“Staff should undergo training in media interpretation”.

“Improve on the training quality and increase entering criteria”.

“The interpreters should be trained”.

“Training is needed”.

Aside the need for training that a majority of them

emphasized on, a few of them said the interpreters should always prepare themselves, as they said:

“Time should be given for preparation”.

“Need for preparation”.

Finally, another remedy was that the speakers need to speak slowly, since some of them said:

“Speakers should be brought to cooperate with media interpreters, share their messages and speak slowly”.

Table 8 below finds out if the untrained media interpreters experience stress during interpreting and what the causes are. Findings show that all of them 30 (100%) agreed that they experience stress and the causes are lack of preparation (50.0%), short notification

Table 8. Distribution of untrained media interpreters as per their experience of stress during interpreting and the causes

Have you ever been stressed up during interpreting?	Frequency (%)	What Is the cause of the stress often faced by media interpreters?	Frequency (%)
Yes	30 (100%)	Lack of preparation	15 (50.0%)
No	0(0.0%)	Short notification	8 (26.7%)
		No prior notification	3 (10.0%)
		Taken by surprise	4 (13.3%)
Total	30 (100%)	Total	30 (100%)

Table 9. Untrained media interpreters' justifications of beingstressed up during media interpreting

Themes	Groundings	Quotations
Lack of training	15	"No training". "Lack of training" "I was totally lost in the sermon and it's embarrassing. I needed the support of the audience to continue. Honestly, all this was caused by lack of training". "This was caused by lack of training". "I experienced that due to lack of training" "Lack of training sometimes causes that".
Lack of preparedness	12	"It was a special domain and I was not prepared and was taken by surprise" "No preparation" "Lack of preparation" "Each time I am not well prepared for an event". "This is sometimes caused by inadequate preparation". "Lack of preparation".
Fear of public	4	"Fear of the public". "This is because I will be facing the public and since every eye is on me, care must be taken". "It is sometimes caused by the fact that I'm afraid to talk in public. Everyone will be paying keen attention to me".
Speaker being fast	3	"Speaker is too fast and not coherent in speech".
Inability to translate certain words or phrases	1	"Not being able to translate certain words or phrases".
Language Deficiency	1	"Language Deficiency"

(26.7%), no prior notification (10.0%) and taken by surprise (13.3%). This therefore means that in order to ward off stress or reduce it to the barest minimum during interpreting, proper preparation prior to the meeting is very crucial and paramount. Furthermore, engaging in an interpreting job at short notice or without prior notification is suicidal to one's profession.

Table 9 above presents justifications the untrained media interpreters gave for being stressed up during media interpreting.

The frequently mentioned justification is lack of training as they said:

"This was caused by lack of training".

"I experienced that due to lack of training"

"Lack of training sometimes causes that".

Another Frequently Mentioned justification is lack of preparedness as they said:

"It was a special domain and I was not prepared and was taken by surprise"

"No preparation"

"Lack of preparation"

Findings also reveal that some of them are stressed up because they are scared of the public, a few of them said:

"This is because I will be facing the public and since everyeye is on me, care must be taken".

"It is sometimes caused by the fact that I am afraid to talk in public as everyone will be paying keen attention to me".

Another justification mentioned by a few of them that the speakers are too fast as they said:

"Speaker is too fast and not coherent in speech".

Finally, a few of them said they are stressed up because of the inability to translate certain words or phrases and because of language deficiency/barrier.

Table 10 below presents strategies the untrained media interpreter intends to use to mitigate stress faced during media interpreting. However, one of them appears more to be a suggestion. This is several stated as instanced in the following declarations:

Table 10. Strategies Untrained media intend to use to mitigate stress faced during media interpreting

Themes	Groundings	Quotations
Need for training	11	"Training is needed". "Need for training". "I need training in media interpreting to boost my morale in case they need a proper interpreter". "By undergoing adequate training in this domain". "Undergoing Proper training in media interpreting". "There is a need for adequate training in media interpreting".
Adequate Preparation	8	"Mastery and psychological preparation are necessary". "Calm down myself and go over my work for adequate preparation". "Proper preparation". "Proper Preparation is Required".
Need for more concentration	2	"To calm down and be more concentrated and take time to understand the domain" "Have a good listening ear and select information to be interpreted".
Need for more practice	2	"Practice more". "Need for more practice".
Seeking for expert	1	"Getting someone who understands the second language".

Table 11. Distribution of untrained media interpreters as per the format of media interpreting, that which is more stressful and how stress can be scaled down

The format of media interpreting by untrained media interpreters		The most stressful		At what level can stress be significantly scaled down?	
	Frequency (%)		Frequency (%)		Frequency (%)
Audio	14(46.7%)	Live or video	28 (93.3%)	After training	2 (6.7%)
Video	2(6.7%)	Audio	2 (6.7%)	Regular practice	28 (93.3%)
Both	14(46.7%)				
Total	30 (100%)	Total	30 (100%)	Total	30 (100%)

Table 12. Distribution of untrained media interpreters as per the mode of media interpreting ten practised and that which is less stressful

Which mode of media interpreting do you practice often?	Which mode is less stress bound?
Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)
Consecutive	Consecutive
17 (56.7%)	4 (13.3%)
Semi consecutive	Semi consecutive
9 (30.0%)	11 (36.7%)
Simultaneous	Simultaneous
2 (6.7%)	13 (43.3%)
Sight translation	Sight translation
2 (6.7%)	2 (6.7%)
Total	Total
30 (100%)	30 (100%)

"Training is needed".
 "Need for training".
 "I need training in media interpreting to boost my morale in case they need a proper interpreter".
 "By undergoing adequate training in this domain."
 As for the strategies per say, a good number of them said they prepare themselves adequately:
 "Mastery and psychological preparation is necessary".
 "Calm down myself and go over my work for adequate preparation".
 "Proper preparation".
 Others said they concentrate more:
 "To calm down and be more concentrated and take time to understand the domain"

"Have a good listening ear and select information to be interpreted".
 Finally, some of them said they try to practise more while others said they seek the services of an expert who understand the second language more:
 "Getting someone who understands the second language".
 Table 11 above shows the distribution of untrained media interpreters as per the format of media interpreting, that which is more stressful and how stress can be reduced. Based on the format of media interpreting by untrained media interpreters, findings show that 14 (46.7%) of them interpret exclusively audio, 2 (6.7%) interpret exclusively video and 14 (46.7%) of

Table 13. Type of media interpreting the conference interpreters are comfortable with

Type of media interpreting conference interpreters are comfortable with.	Frequency	Percentage
None	7	23.3
No response	6	20.0
Radio and TV	3	10.0
Conference Interpreting	2	6.7
Consecutive	2	6.7
Interpretation of Speeches	2	6.7
Live Broadcast	2	6.7
On internet dubbing	2	6.7
Press conference	2	6.7
Religious Denomination	2	6.7
Total	30	100

Table 14. Conference interpreters' impression about media interpreting practice in Cameroon

Impression about media interpreting practice in Cameroon (n, %)	Reasons Themes	Quotations
Not satisfactory (21, 73.3%)	Lack of efficiency	"There is lack of efficiency". "The interpreters are not competent and efficient enough in their job". "Some of the interpreters are not really efficient".
	Poor mastery of language	"Poor mastery of working language". "Still slow, a lot of amateurism. Some of them do not have a good mastery of the language". "I have observed that some of them lack good language skills". "The language skills of some of the media interpreters are not really good for the profession".
	Most interpreters not trained as professionals	"Most of the media interpreters are not trained and they just struggle to be able to render their papers in their target language". "A few of the interpreters are not professionals". "Some of the interpreters are not professionally trained".
	Bias Reporting	"Unfaithful delivery".
Satisfactory (4, 13.3%)	Proper translation of the Head of State speech from French into English	"The interpretation (from French into English) of the Head of State end of year speeches".
Very satisfactory (4, 13.3%)	Interpretation done in a professional manner	"It is performed in a professional manner". "The interpretation is done in a professional way". "The interpreters are efficient"

them interpret both.

As for the most stressful one, findings show that a majority of them 28 (93.3%) said live or video, while 2 (6.7%) of them said audio.

Finally, at what level can stress be significantly scaled down, a majority of 28 (93.3%) said regular practice, while 2 (6.7%) of them said after training.

Finding out the mode of media interpreting ten practiced and that which is less stressful, findings on table 12 above show that 17 (56.7%) of the untrained media interpreters often practise consecutive, 9 (30.0%) of them often practise semi-consecutive and 2 (6.7%) of them often practise simultaneous and sight translation.

As for which type is less stressful, findings reveal that most of them 13 (43.3%) said simultaneous, 11 (36.7%) said semi-consecutive, 4 (13.3%) said consecutive and 2 (6.7%) of them said sight translation.

Table 13 above finds out the type of media interpreting the media professionals are comfortable with, and findings show that 3 (10%) of them said Radio and TV, while 2 (6.7%) of them of equal proportion said Conference interpreting, Consecutive, Interpretation of speeches, Live Broadcast, On internet dubbing, Press conference and Religious denominations, while 7 (23.3%) of them are not comfortable with any of the above.

Table 15. Conference Interpreters' opinion on strategies to boost the interpretation profession in Cameroon

What do you think can be done to give a fillip to its practice in the interest of the interpretation profession in Cameroon (no =number % Frequency)	Reasons	
	Themes	Quotations
Training on the job (7, 23.3%)	Adding of skills/value/ Increasing performance	“Those who are already employed have got skills and such training will be an added value”. “There are those who are already working. So, if they need further training, they can be trained on-the-job so as to refine their skills”. “Journalists are already at work. So, by training them on-the-job will go a long way into enhancing their performance”.
	Inability to pay trained interpreters	“Media houses may not be able to pay trained interpreters or journalists”.
Employ only professional interpreters (2, 6.7%)	Rendered quality service	“I believe people properly trained will be able to defend the profession even though some can learn on the job”.
Employ journalists and interpreters or vice versa (6, 20%)	Need for good communication and language skills	“By employing a journalist interpreter or vice versa will go a long way to solve the problems. For media interpretation, you need the communication skills of the professional journalist as well as the language skills of the interpreter”. “It is important to have both competences”.
Training on the job and employ only professional interpreters (9, 30%)	Job done in a professional manner	“It is better than one. The job will be done in a professional and efficient manner”.
Training on the job and Employ journalists and interpreters or vice-versa. (6, 20%)	Adequate Skill acquisition	“In any developmental context characterized by scarcity of resources, multitasking and flexibility are the only option”.
	Permit journalists on the job to gain skills in interpretation	By doing so, it allows journalists who are on the job to receive training in interpretation”.

First and foremost, the respondents agreed that they are keen to media interpreting in Cameroon and many of them 27 (90.0%) said they have bothered to find out if those practicing media interpreting in Cameroon are trained or not while 3 (10.0%) of them have not.

Thus, table 14 above presents the conference interpreters' impression about media interpreting practice in Cameroon and, findings show that a majority of them 19 (63.3%) are not satisfied with reason being that there is lack of efficiency, as instanced in the following declarations:

“There is a lack of efficiency”.

“The interpreters are not competent and efficient enough in their job”.

Poor mastery of language/poor language skills is another reason for their dissatisfaction as they explained:

“I have observed that some of them lack good language skills”.

“The language skills of some of the media interpreters are not really good for the profession”.

Furthermore, lack of training of most media interpreters another reason for their dissatisfaction, as they said:

“Most of the media interpreters are not trained and they just struggle to be able to render their papers in their target language”.

“A few of the interpreters are not professionals”

Finally, bias in reporting was another contention for their dissatisfaction, as they said:

“Unfaithful delivery”.

On the contrary, for the few who are satisfied 8 (26.7%), their reasons are that the Head of State's speeches are properly translated and that interpretation is done in a professional manner

“It is performed in a professional manner”.

“The interpretation is done in a professional way”

“The interpreters are efficient”.

Worthy to highlight here is that the Head of State's speeches are being voiced-over meticulously and recorded before they are played to the hearing and viewing of radio and TV listeners and viewers respectively. This is different from any live interpreting erroneously believed to be by many.

Based on the strategies to boost the interpreting profession in Cameroon, that is, what can be done to give a fillip to its practice in the interest of the interpreting profession in Cameroon, findings on table 15 above show that a majority of the conference interpreter recommended that need for training on the job so as to add value and skills to increase performance. Others said only well trained professionals should be employed to render quality service. Others said both journalists and interpreters be employed, on-the-job training be given so that the job will be done in a professional manner and

will enable journalists to acquire some interpretation skills.

CONCLUSION

In this article, emphasis was put on the media interpreting the landscape in Cameroon in general. Worthy of note is the fact that media interpreting is an integral part of community interpreting. The types of media interpreting practiced in Cameroon have been highlighted. Lack of training by media interpreters is the primary impediment to good performance and cause of poor interpreting. To improve on the performance, there is a dire need for formal or hands-on training, crash courses or employment or making recourse to trained interpreters, either on a permanent or ad hoc basis, when in need of their services instead of resorting to untrained interpreters to the detriment of the target audience.

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