

## CHAPTER ONE

### 0.1 INTRODUCTION

In Europe and Africa there exist professional associations, whose aims are to protect the interest of their professions and members. In Cameroon for example, there are professional associations like the Cameroon Bar association, the Cameroon National Order of medical doctors, the National Order of pharmacists and the National Order of Civil Engineers just to mention a few. In order to come together and discuss issues related to their profession, translators came together in 1994 and created an association for Cameroon translators and interpreters called APTIC. Since the existence of APTIC (the Associations of Professional Translators and Interpreters of Cameroon) for over 17 years, the translation profession in recent years experienced a multiplicity of translation associations.

Recently, there has been the creation of CATIS (Cameroon Translators and Interpreters Society) in 2008, ATTRIC (Association of Translators, Terminologists, Revisers and Interpreters of Cameroon). Curiously enough, ASTI Buea no longer enjoys the monopoly of training translators and interpreters in Cameroon. This situation was characterised by the creation of ISTI (Institut Supérieur de Traduction et d'Interprétation Yaoundé) and the introduction of a professional Masters' programme in translation and interpretation in the Faculty of Arts, Letters and Social Sciences, University of Yaounde I. Given the many translators that these three schools shall continue to graduate more associations of translators may still crop up. Incidentally, the multiplicity of associations of translators comes up at the time that the translation profession in Cameroon is continuously "invaded" by non professionals including other problems which the profession continues to face. The obvious consequences are the eye sore translations on official and private bill boards which certainly leave many questions in the minds of conscious educated onlookers.

Given the fact that one of the major objectives of every translation association is to protect the interest of its members and the profession, considering the fact that the translation practice is still plagued with problems, we therefore decided to investigate the extent to which these associations have gone in the development of translation in Cameroon.

## **1.2 SCOPE OF STUDY**

This study focuses only on translation associations in Cameroon. However, the study intends to use the experience of other professional corps like the National Order of translators, Terminologists and Interpreters of Quebec – Canada and others, to serve as an example for the improvement of the translation profession in Cameroon. With regard to the respondents, it will be limited only to those who work as translators (in-house and freelance) trained or not trained.

This research limits itself only to associations of translators in Cameroon who work in the following languages: French, English, Spanish, German, Arabic, Chinese etc. Consequently, it excludes (Cameroon Association of Bible Translation and Literacy) CABTAL which was created in 1989 and works in collaboration with SIL on Bible translation into national languages and literacy.

## **1.3 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS**

It is appropriate to attempt a theoretical and conceptual definition of terms that are directly or indirectly linked to this work and which have been used in this work. Focus here is on translation as a discipline and some key elements related to the translation profession in Cameroon.

### 1.3.1 TRANSLATION

It has been noticed that there are as varied definitions of the term translation as there are translators. This therefore accounts for several definitions of the said term as exemplified below: Catford (1965) as cited by Peter Terence (1987:5) defines translation as: “The replacement of textual material in one language (source language) by an equivalent textual material in another language (target language)”.

Paul Kussmaul as cited by Ntoumou (2009) defines translation by stating that the message is at the centre of translation. According to him translation is not simply the transfer of words and structure from one language to another. The message must be the primordial concern of the translator.

According to Brislin (1976:1) as quoted by Peter-Terence still, translation is: " The transfer of thoughts and ideas from one language (SL) to another language (TL), whether the languages are in written or oral form; whether the languages have established orthographies or do not have such standardisation; or whether one or both languages is or are based on signs, as with sign language of the deaf.”

Catford's definition is straight to the point, but it does not include the aspect of the message as is the case with Paul Kussmaul. Brislin in his definition does not stay within translation, but brings in the oral aspect which is more of interpretation. He also includes sign language which also inclines more towards interpretation than translation.

From the above definitions, it is glaring that whichever definition one considers appropriate, translation involves the SL, the TL, the process, fidelity, the message and the product. Basically, translation can be defined as the rendering of written material from one language (source language) to another language (target language) full time or part time in order to earn a living. Translation is a form of communication, because the translator acts as a

mediator and facilitator, between the author of the source text and readers of the target text, Ubanako (forth coming). This means that without the translator those who do not understand the source language are completely deprived of the message in the source text.

Translation is either carried out as an in-house or as a freelance. The in-house or staff translator works with a defined structure or institution and has some job security as he or she is sure of a regular flow of a monthly salary. His or her job is full time, and because of its routine nature it provides for high level of specialisation. Although it can sometimes be boring the job of an in-house translator is equally challenging. On the other hand a freelance translator is a self employed individual who gets texts either from translation agencies, companies or from individual clients. Before a freelance translator becomes his own boss, he has to be meticulous, organised and hard working in order to continuously win the confidence of the clients since the contrary would mean loss of continuous flow of translation jobs.

### **1.3.2 INTERPRETATION**

Interpretation is the rendering of a message orally, from a speaker to an audience and it is usually between two or three people who speak different languages and do not understand each other. It is very important here to indicate that there is a distinct difference between translation and interpretation, because in Cameroon it is common to hear even educated people use them interchangeably. Translation has to do with rendering written material from one language to another, while interpretation is the oral rendition of a spoken message from the source language into the target language. Translation is from text to text and it allows time for research in order to produce a faithful rendition. The overall meaning, tone and style in the target language are what matter rather than syntax of the source language. Basically, translation is text to text while interpretation is mouth to mouth.

There are various types of interpretation practices. Consecutive interpretation is when the interpreter is among the participants and waits for the speaker to finish expressing himself or herself, then the interpreter renders the message in the target language. The interpreter is allowed to take short notes which help him to interpret. This can be practised in situations such as courts, hospitals and business negotiations. Consecutive interpretation requires formal training and in some specific cases like court interpretation, it requires certification. In semi-consecutive interpretation the speaker speaks and allows a short time for the interpreter to interpret, but time is not allowed for note taking. There is also simultaneous interpretation where the interpreter listens to the speaker and repeats the same words almost at the same time in a different language. The interpreter operates from the booth and the participants put on headphones. What the speaker says is transmitted to the ear of the interpreter while the interpreter repeats it into a microphone, Training and experiences are important in this kind of interpretation. Given the fact that it is very demanding and complex it is paid at a higher rate than consecutive interpretation. Simultaneous interpretation is required during business conferences, training seminars or presentations. It is a special form of interpretation and requires appropriate equipment. Escort interpretation is another form of interpretation and takes place when an interpreter accompanies a delegation on tour or on an excursion. Sight translation as a form of interpretation involves scanning a document (reading through it fast and knowing what it is all about) before rendering it into the target language. Sight translation requires that the interpreter reads ahead in order to render the next unit of meaning with accuracy and fidelity using speech skills (clear diction and fluidity). Liaison interpretation takes place when a group of people go on an excursion or in a public place. In this case the interpreter listens to the speaker and speaks in a loud voice in order to enable the audience understand him or her. Whispering is a type of interpretation which involves people of high reputation like heads of States, Prime Ministers, Ministers, heads of international

organisations etc. In this case the high official speaks only to the hearing of the interpreter who listens very attentively and interprets by whispering in the target language to the counterpart official. Whispering usually takes place in a discrete manner. In some countries like Canada, there are conference interpreters (for business, government, conventions, sales meetings, training sessions, board and committee meetings, annual meetings, press conferences etc.) and court interpreters.

### **1.3.3 ASSOCIATIONS OF TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS**

Associations of translators and interpreters are groups of people who practise translation or interpretation as an occupation, and who have decided to come together in order to exchange ideas, with the objective of defending the interest of their profession and their members. In some countries where translation and interpretation are well organised the associations are created following specialised domains. Consequently, there are associations of literary translators, associations of court interpreters, associations of legal translators, associations of medical translators etc.

### **1.3.4 ORGANISATION OF THE TRANSLATION PROFESSION**

Cambridge Advanced Learners' Dictionary defines "organise" as the planning of an activity or event. The Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary defines it as putting something in a working order. In the light of these definitions, can we say that the translation profession in Cameroon is planned or put in working order? In this case, it requires an Order or Council which defines, regulates and intervenes in case of violation of ethics and doubtful work.

In this light the translation profession in Cameroon is only organised at the level of the Presidency as follows: Circular n° 5/CAB/PR of 23 April 1984 on the functioning of the translators, interpreters and support staff of the Linguistic Services of the Presidency of the

Republic. At the level of the Prime Minister's office the translation profession was organised by: Circular n° 1/CAB/PM of 16 August 1991 on the practice of bilingualism in public and parapublic administration. In this light, there is a Linguistic Service headed by a Director and assisted by two sub Directors. At the level of the National Assembly it is also organised by: Decree n° 2009/001/AB/AN on the organisation of the General Secretariat of the National Assembly, paragraph 11. At the level of the Ministries, there are translation units headed by unit heads with the rank of sub directors and assisted by Assistant Researchers (translators). But the working conditions are sometimes deplorable ranging from either complete absence of equipment or they are available, but obsolete. Some translation units like that of University of Yaounde I can only be compared to a cubicle which can barely take a chair and a table. This is compounded by the fact that nobody is in charge of finding out how the units function. Many have abandoned their posts for greener pastures, but it borders no one.

## **1.5 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

This research project stems from the following problem:

The major visible problem in the translation landscape of Cameroon is the absence of any legal or institutional framework governing the organisation, monitoring and regulation of translation practice in Cameroon. This could be named a National Order of Translators and Interpreters. This Order will then help in ensuring the organisation, monitoring, and regulation of the translation profession in Cameroon. This problem has been existing now for 18 years since it caught the attention of Yuyen (1993) who says: "The translation profession is bedevilled by the stark non-existence of laws passed, and enacted by legislative organs with the view to governing the translation profession."

Other satellite problems cited below are simply as a result of the absence of such an authority. However, the government made some commendable effort. In 1965, 1980, and 1998, by creating a Linguistic Service which later on became a Department of Linguistic

Services at the Presidency of the Republic. Ntoumou (2009). In the course of this work one of the acute problems identified is the abandonment of offices by translators for greener pastures. During a conversation with an informant he revealed that in 2008 there were about eight translators in the Ministry of Public Health, but the number has now trickled down to three. This problem is further compounded by the fact that since 2003 the government has not recruited translators into the Public Service. In 2008, the government launched the recruitment of translators into the Public Service. Hundreds of applications were received, but results have never been published. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of March, 2011, a special recruitment of 25,000 youths into the Public Service was launched, and that of translators has just been published.

Another pungent disturbance is the presence of poor translations produced in newspapers and billboards. This is acknowledged by Kiwoh (2011:290-291)..This probably stems from the recruitment of untrained people as translators based on personal or family relationship. For example, a case in point is the recent appointment of trained social welfare inspectors and trained guidance councillors as heads of translation units of the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development. The question now is: what have translation associations done to question situations of this nature? As an attempt to address the above problems some suggestions shall be made later in this work.

## **1.6 HYPOTHESIS**

This research work is based on the hypothesis that Associations of translators and interpreters have contributed inadequately to the development of translation in Cameroon.

## **1.7 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to examine the existence of the associations of translators and interpreters in Cameroon for 17 years, and how far they have gone in contributing to the development of the profession in Cameroon.

Given that the Associations of translators have been existing now for 17 years, given that the number of associations of translators has increased from one to three, and possibly more in the pipeline, we are out to examine their objectives which are linked to the protection of the profession, and how far they have gone in achieving these objectives.

## **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY**

The primordial importance of this work is that it will first and foremost add to the scanty literature that exists in social science research particularly in the domain of translation. In fact, a lot has been written on bilingualism compared to translation. While on research we realised that most final year students of translation schools prefer carrying out research on glossary, practical translation and terminology.

Furthermore, this study shall provide results and recommendations that can help policy makers and translation associations to improve on the translation profession in Cameroon.

## **1.9 DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED**

It will be an overstatement for us to claim that this research was carried out with no difficulties. Difficulties encountered were during the search for documentation, during the collection of data and interviews.

The first difficulty was at the level of documentation given that ISTI as a young school of translation could not provide us with enough material for literature review particularly on past dissertations. We were obliged to go to ASTI – Buea. On arrival at Buea, a series of

public holidays and weekends prevented us from having access to their library at the time we had envisaged, thus prolonging our stay against our wish. Another factor which prolonged our stay in Buea was the fact that the library working hours which are initially from 8 a.m – 9 p.m were changed to: 8 a.m – 3p.m for the reason that it was holiday period.

The second problem was at the level of locating the scarce respondents (translators). Most translators are in translation units of ministries, companies and translation firms. Some translation units were difficult to locate as they were found separate from their main ministerial buildings. A typical example is the translation unit of the Ministry of Finance which is located in the main building of the head quarters of the Cameroon Red Cross. Even workers of the Ministry of Finance did not know where their translation unit is found. It was therefore after a serious search in vain that a phone call to one class mate who had gone there on internship gave us the location.

Access to some ministries was only at particular hours of the day. The security guards of the Ministries of Public Health, Culture etc.could only allow visitors as from 11a.m. We were bound to hang around aimlessly waiting for the stipulated time. Some respondents categorically indicated that they were too busy to fill questionnaires at a particular time. A case in point is that of one respondent who said he was too busy to fill a questionnaire even after keeping the questionnaire for four days. The said respondent claimed that he would give it to his junior to fill it on his behalf. Two phone calls and two visits to his office yielded no fruits and the said questionnaire was never retrieved.

Some respondents gave appointments which they never respected. This made us to go to some translation units more than twice. We were also embarrassed by situations where respondents respected the appointments, but had misplaced the questionnaires. Of course, other questionnaires had to be provided.

It may be interesting to know that some respondents (non-professional translators) felt very uneasy with the questionnaire and were hesitant to fill in. Some accepted to fill in the questionnaire only when we convinced them that the exercise was purely for academic purposes.

Despite the above problems encountered we exercised patience, humility and determination till the end of the research.

## **1.10 ORGANISATION OF WORK**

This work is divided into five chapters. Chapter one highlights the historical events that led to the institutionalisation of translation in Cameroon, the creation of the first association of translators and eventual increase in the number of translation associations from one to three .. This is followed by delimitation of the study, definition of key terms, the statement of the problems, hypothesis, objectives of the study, difficulties encountered and organisation of work.

Chapter two focuses on theoretical considerations and review of related literature and past thesis related to the research under considerations. Chapter three examines the methodology adopted to carry out this research. The methodology ranges from library research, questionnaire administered to respondents and interviews, internet sources and observations. Chapter four analyses the data which emanates from the questionnaires filled by the respondents. This is followed by interpretation of the analysed data and the results of interviews granted to some three members of the different translation associations.

Finally, chapter five handles discussions of findings and recommendations which could improve the situation of the translation profession in Cameroon and suggestions for further research in the domain of translation.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter commences with an examination of peculiar aspects that are related to language since translation can only take place when the translator is able to handle at least two languages at a time (the source and the target language). This is followed by translation and associations of translators in Africa and the rest of the world. This is followed by a review of existing knowledge as well as past works that are related to the research under consideration. In this light a series of dissertations and other theoretical works have been written in this domain, but we have limited ourselves to a few which we were able to reach.

From the above definitions by Tyler and Jerome it is advisable to conform to fidelity in relation to the meaning and not words or structure of the source text.

#### **2.1 BILINGUALISM**

In course of research we realised that in Cameroon, bilingualism and translation are like two sides of the same coin and are thus inseparable. It is because of the bilingual nature of Cameroon that translation became indispensable. Through research we realised that a lot has been written on bilingualism as follows. Constable, (1977). "Bilingualism in the United Republic of Cameroon." Kouega (1999). "Forty years of official bilingualism in Cameroon," "English Today," Kouega (2006). "Bilingualism at tertiary level education in Cameroon: The case of University of Yaoundé II Soa." Kouega (2007). "Functional French-English bilingualism among Anglophones in Cameroon's tertiary institutions," Kouega (2008). Kiwoh (2011), "Official language bilingualism and language management in Cameroon," just to mention a few.

Bilingualism is one of the terms that have as many definitions as there are sociolinguists. Grosjean as cited by Kiwoh (2011) defines a bilingual person as someone who has a linguistic ability in two languages similar to that of a native speaker, Bloomfield (1989:10) sees a bilingual person as someone who has a native-like control of two languages, Beasmore (1982) defines a bilingual as an individual who demonstrates complete mastery of two different languages without interference between two different linguistic processes, all as cited by Kiwoh (2011). Malmkijar (1991) as cited by Nsawir defines bilingualism as a situation where a person whose linguistic ability in two languages is similar to that of a native speaker. Some linguists disagree with the above definitions, because according to them someone may learn the language of another, but will lack some phonological characteristics of native speech. Some say that one can learn a language, but will lack the mannerisms. Do the above linguistic weaknesses make the person unilingual? This researcher does not think so, because in Cameroon, for example three persons could be bilingual, but can be classified as the bilingual, the more bilingual, and the most bilingual. Another argument raised by some linguists is whether bilingualism involves only two official languages or it includes national languages. Types of bilingualism include individual bilingualism, official bilingualism, institutional bilingualism, societal bilingualism etc.

## **2.2 MULTILINGUALISM**

Multilingualism appears to be one of the terms with several definitions as there are linguists with every one using his or her own experience and context to define the term. The Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary defines multilingualism as a situation where people or a group of people are able to speak more than two languages written or spoken for communication. For one reason or the other some people are able to speak and write more than three languages. Because of globalisation, the more languages one can speak and or write

the more advantageous it is. It is very common today to see Cameroonians who speak and write French and English, but are still grappling with the third language in order to be given scholarship to study in the Countries where such languages are spoken. This is not the only factor that accounts for multilingualism. There are other reasons like geographical mobility, environmental influence, intermarriages etc.

## **2.3 LANGUAGE CONTACT PHENOMENA**

A language contact phenomenon refers to those results that are produced when languages come together. This obviously occurs in bilingual and multilingual settings. Some of these phenomena would likely include: linguistic borrowing, linguistic interference, and code switching.

### **2.3.1 LINGUISTIC BORROWING**

One of the effects produced when two languages are used in the same environment by the same people is linguistic borrowing. It is normal for a speaker of French language to use the word "marketing" while speaking French. On the other hand it is equally normal for a speaker of English Language to use the word "rendez -vous" while speaking English Language just to mention these two cases.

### **2.3.2 LINGUISTIC INTERFERENCE**

Linguistic interference occurs when a learner wrongly uses a word or expression from another language either consciously or unconsciously. In Cameroon this interference is at the level of English and French, English and Pidgin English, English and the local languages, and French and the local languages. Concerning English and French Languages, it is common to hear speakers of English language using "stage" instead of internship or artsmanship. At the level of English language and pidgin, some Cameroonians are fond of saying "I am going me

instead of" I am going. This is influenced by the Pidgin English expression "a di go me ".Between English Language and the local languages, it has been noticed that in the North West Region for example, the people of Kom are noted for their inability to pronounce letter r.Consequently, run is pronounced as lun.Still in the North West Region it is believed that most people from Nso find it difficult to pronounce words like show, goal etc.In some parts of the South West Region people are noted for pronouncing "little" as "litul." However, it is believed that these peculiarities occur mostly with those who have not studied English as a discipline and are therefore not conscious of phonetics.

### **2.3.3 CODE- SWITCHING**

Code- switching is when a speaker decides to switch or change from one language to another during a speech or conversation. This sort of linguistic competence is usually exhibited by those who are bilingual and can do so with ease. This means that somebody who is talking to an audience can code-switch while two people conversing among themselves can equally code-switch for one reason or the other. Code-switching can be done between one milieu and another. For example, a child who is a bilingual Spanish- English speaker might speak Spanish at home and and English in class, but Spanish at recess.

Code-switching can be practised between a primary and secondary language or between secondary languages. Code-switching can be practised within one sentence structure. This is called intra-sentential switching. Code-switching can also be practised in between two sentence structures; this is called intersentential switching or extra sentential switching. Tag switching is the switching of either a tag phrase or word from language B to language A meanwhile intra-word switching occurs within a word itself such as in a morpheme. Code-switching is said to have originated in 1977 from the United States

Of American (U.S.A.) in Martin Luther King Elementary School. The parents of the school sued the school authority claiming that their children were not receiving equal educational opportunities, because they were not being taught to use the African American Language. This case established the legitimacy of African American Language within a legal framework and this language was used to assist those students to acquire and master "Standard English".

## **2.4 SPECIFIC CASE STUDY**

Ntoumou (2009) focuses on the changes in the translation profession with particular attention on the training, and practice of translation in Cameroon and abroad. The work under review is similar to this researcher's in the sense that they both trace the history of translation in Cameroon from reunification in 1960. Secondly, both works mention APTIC as an association of professional translators in Cameroon. The difference between the work under review and ours is that we highlight the creation of CATIS and ATTRIC as translation associations and the contribution of the three associations in the wake of the challenges continuously facing the translation profession in Cameroon.

Takougang (2009) examines the role of institutionalised translation in a bilingual Cameroon. In this connection, he questions whether translation is actually practised in a bilingual Cameroon given that Article I paragraph 3 of the Constitution of the Republic of Cameroon stipulates "The official languages of the Republic of Cameroon shall be English and French, both languages having the same status. The state shall guarantee the promotion of bilingualism throughout the country. It shall endeavour to protect and promote national languages." The work under review is similar to ours from the perspective that they both indicate that bilingualism in Cameroon originated from reunification of former British Southern Cameroon and former East Cameroon although the work under review does not

devote an entire chapter for this purpose. Another similarity stems from the fact that both works examine translation as a discipline including other aspects related to translation such as interpretation, sign language etc. However, our work differs from that under review in the sense that we examine the extent to which translation associations have addressed the challenges facing the translation profession in Cameroon.

Yuyen (1993) makes an overview of the huddles that stand on the way of the translation profession in Cameroon both in the private and public sectors. The work under review is on the same wave length with ours, because we equally present the problems plaguing the translation profession in the statement of problems. Furthermore, Yuyen still (1993:24) makes a historical overview of translation in Cameroon, an aspect which we found indispensable in our work. The disparity in both works stem from the fact that we question the role of translation associations during their 17 years of existence. Another point of divergence resides in the fact that Yuyen (1993) in his historical overview includes the geographical situation and a profound ethnic and linguistic situation of Cameroon, an aspect which is completely absent from our work.

Bongo-Sambia (1990) takes a look at the development of translation and interpretation in a monolingual Central African Republic. In this connection, the said author highlights the problems facing the translation and interpretation profession in the Central African institutions such as: courts, the National Assembly, Embassies, International Organisations, Radio and Television houses, just to mention a few. While Désiré deals with translation and interpretation in a monolingual Central African Republic with French as the official language, we are rather dealing with translation and interpretation in a bilingual setting with French and English as official languages as stipulated by the constitution. Both works are similar, because they both focus on translation problems in the various countries. On the other hand we

question the contribution of translation associations in Cameroon in the face of these problems, an aspect which is completely absent from the work under review.

Ebongwe (2005) focuses on the study of translation and interpretation and ethics within the Cameroon setting. The work under review is similar to ours in the sense that both works dwell on the abnormalities that characterise translation in Cameroon. On the other hand the differences lie in the fact that Ebongwe looks at the profession vis-à-vis ethics of the profession. But we are rather questioning the role of the associations of translators for 17 years in the development of the profession.

Naida (1987), writing on translation as a profession claims that translators are not made, but rather born. The work under review is similar to ours from the perspective that we equally focus on the translation profession. He further explains that translation is a profession, because there are people who earn their living by translating either for an institution or by functioning as free-lancers or independent practitioners. However, the disparity between the two works stems from the fact that while the work under review focuses on who a translator is ,we are rather examining the contribution of the associations of translators and interpreters to the development of translation in Cameroon.

Vinay and Darbelnet (1977:23) focus on the theme of translation and argue that to function as a translator one needs to be trained. To further buttress their point, they say :

On lit trop souvent, même sous la plume de traducteurs avertis que la traduction est un art. Cette formule, pour contenir une part de vérité, end néanmoins à limiter arbitrairement la nature de notre objet. En fait, la traduction est une discipline exacte, possédant ses techniques et ses problèmes particuliers... » « Certes, si l'on a pu dire que traduire est l'art, c'est parce qu'il est possible de comparer plusieurs traductions d'un même original,

d'en louer d'autres pour leur fidélité et leur mouvement.

From the translator's product it is often easy to ascertain that translation is an art. Nevertheless the preceding statement is true and lies with the subject. In fact, translation as a discipline has its techniques and particular problems.

It is certainly because translation is an art that we are able to compare several target texts translated from one source text; some target texts rejected and others heralded for their fidelity and dynamism". (My translation).

While writing on translation Bassnet – Mcguire (1980) believes that translation involves far more than the replacement of lexical and grammatical items between languages, and as can be seen in the translation of idioms and metaphors. She then proceeds with the explanation that this may involve discarding the basic linguistic elements of the SL text so as to achieve Popovic's goal of expressive identity between SL and TL texts. But once the translation moves away from close linguistic equivalence the problems of determining the exact nature of the level of equivalence aimed for begin to emerge. This researcher's work is similar to that of Bassnet-Mcquire, because both works examine translation as a profession. Nevertheless, there exists a difference between the two works .Bassnet-Mcquire raises the point that translation is not simply the replacement of lexical and grammatical items between languages. On the contrary we rather focus on whether associations of translators and interpreters contribute to the development of the translation profession in Cameroon.

Yuyen (1993) in "A critical Analysis of Professional Translation in Cameroon 1960 - 1993 " makes an overview of the major huddles that stand on the way of translation in

Cameroon, in both the public and private sectors. The above work ties with ours, because we equally present some of the problems plaguing the translation profession in Cameroon. Another similarity stems from the fact that both works examine translation from the historical perspective. In Yuyen's historical perspective he includes the geographical situation, including a profound ethnic and linguistic situation in Cameroon; an aspect which our historical background to the study does not mention.

## **2.5 OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF TRANSLATION**

The history of translation dates as far back as the beginning of humanity. It is therefore believed that translation started from the period of the tower of Babel when the descendants of Noah decided to challenge God by building a tower that would reach heaven. To put the situation under control, God made them to speak several languages and scattered them all over the world with the existence of many languages people looked for the means to communicate with each other thus translation was born. Mention is made of Saint Jerome, the patron of translation who translated from Greek to Hebrew. The coming of the renaissance period then contributed to the development of translation. because of the advent of the printing press. The early languages in translation were Greek, Latin and Hebrew. Martin Luther King understood the above languages including German, and was then very instrumental in translating from those languages into German. In the sixteen century Tyndall who mastered Greek Hebrew and a few other languages translated the Old and New Testament into English. Today, the Bible has been translated into about 200 languages and new translations into other local languages come up every year. Translators yesterday and today have remained a precious and indispensable link between groups and people who are separated by linguistic barriers.

### **2.5.1 TRANSLATION IN THE WEST**

During the period of renaissance there was the advent of the printing press which as earlier indicated encouraged many people to write. The need for translators increased as many countries were eager to know what was written by those whose languages they did not understand. Translators like Geoffrey Chaucer, William Caxton and William Tyndale proved their worth within this period. Since then translation has evolved tremendously in the west. Today, in some countries of the West translation is well organised, but it is the contrary in some countries. In Germany or Canada a translator must show proof of adequate training and experience to be allowed to practice. It is not the Case in France where anybody can auto proclaim himself a translator, because he or she is able to gabble words in a foreign language. In France there is no Order or Council that regulates the practice of the translation profession. In Canada there is the act of 28 July 1988 respecting the use of the official languages. There is also a National Order of Quebec to which translators belong.

### **2.5.2 TRANSLATION IN AFRICA**

For the sake of clarity we shall discuss translation in Africa under the pre- colonial period, the colonial period and the present day as discussed by Ubanako (forthcoming). During the pre-colonial period, communication was rooted more in oral tradition as handed down from one generation to another. Because of the reputation they had succeeded to build for themselves the praise singers were those handling translation and interpretation in the Kings Courts though they did it without knowing that it was translation. Through them the people could understand the king and this made them to wield political power.

The colonial period commences from 15<sup>th</sup> century with the first encounter between Africans and Europeans and ends around the 1950s, When the Europeans arrived there was the need for the Arabs and Africans to understand them. Some Africans learned the Europeans

languages and were able to translate. Some great names involved in translation at this period included Amo (a Ghanaian slave who became a great scholar and could speak Dutch, German, French, Latin, Greek and Hebrew. He later on became a University lecturer and worked as a Court councillor for Frederick II of Prussia. Another period under translation in Africa is the post colonial period. This period is immediately before, and after independence of most African Countries, and it saw a continuation of religious translation which started in the colonial period. European missionaries continued to learn local languages of evangelisation and translation of the Bible and other religious texts.

The Bible has not only been translated into African languages but also into Pidgin English, a hybrid lingua franca which has seen the light of day because of contact between African languages and English and is widely used in Africa. Some Africans who distinguished themselves with a good command of both European and African languages decided to translate and transcribe Africans oral literature into European languages with the aim of giving a more authentic version as opposed to translated texts by colonisers, for example, Birago Diop of Senegal and Okot P'Bitek the Ugandan writer and translator. Today, translation between European languages has grown in leaps and bounds as most African nations and organisations like CEMAC, AU AND ECOWAS carry out their business in European languages. These institutions have recruited and continue to recruit a good number of translators to meet their demands. These African States thus saw the need for professionals and in the 1990s, certain countries started opening schools of translation where instead of sending many of their citizens abroad to be trained, they were trained in schools created locally. This is the case with ASTI of the University of Buea which trains translators not only from Cameroon but from other neighbouring African Countries who today work with national and international Bodies, governments and free lancers. The translation domain in Africa still remains largely unregulated which has given the leeway for quacks and adventurers to invade

the profession. Besides, there is the quasi absence of professional organisations which can really defend the interest of translators. Perhaps the only association of translators that is credible for defending the interest of translators and the profession is the Tanzanian Association of Translators.

### **2.5.3 TRANSLATION IN CAMEROON**

There are fundamental historical facts that led to the union between English and French languages in Cameroon thus giving rise to the need for translation in the official and private sectors. One of these historical facts is the famous Foumban conference. Fanso (1997:289) posits that the vote in favour of reunification called for a conference of Anglophone and Francophone leaders of nationalism to discuss the modalities of the new Cameroon and to draw up its constitution."

According to Dze-Ngwa (2008:49), after the First World War, the defeat and ousting of the Germans from Cameroon and the subsequent partition of the territory, there was further language mutation in Cameroon as Britain and France further complicated the plurilingual nature of the country. As expected, Britain naturally made English as an official language of her own sphere of Cameroon. In French administered Cameroon, French was the official language. To still quote Dze-Ngwa (2008) in "Les Mutations en Afrique," "Officially, the French were categorically opposed to the use of local languages in school and even to feature as a subject in the school curriculum. This was intended to avoid the spread of any local language which could rival the French language in the territory."

From the proliferation of hundreds of local languages in Cameroon today it gives the impression that the French were short sighted since what they were preventing still happened in leaps and bounds.

However the missionaries did not implement such a policy as some of them instead encouraged the use of local languages by studying them. For example, the Baptist missionaries arrived Cameroon in the middle of the nineteenth century and Joseph Merick who can be considered as one of the pioneer translators and interpreters in Cameroon studied a number of local languages among them, Isubu into which he translated part of the New Testament and the Douala language into which he later translated the Bible Alfred Saker, another Baptist Missionary who arrived Victoria in 1958 also contributed to the history of translation in Cameroon. He studied Douala and translated the Bible into it. In 1962, he published the New Testament in Douala.

Apart from the Baptist missionaries, the Presbyterians also contributed enormously to the development of translation in Cameroon. The American Presbyterian Mission led by Dr A.C.Good arrived in 1885 and in 1889, they founded a mission at Efoulan and another in 1895 in Ebolowa. They succeeded in translating the Bible into the Bulu Language, the New Testament was published in 1926 and by 1940, the Old Testament was published. The American Presbyterians established themselves in the Southern part of French speaking Cameroon while another group of Presbyterians, this time from Switzerland and Germany established in the English speaking section of Cameroon. Like the Baptist and American Presbyterians they also contributed greatly to the history and development of translation and interpretation in Cameroon. Dr Vielhauer also collected, translated and published proverbs and stories of the Mungaka culture. Dictionaries and grammar books were equally published in Mungaka, making the language the most developed during the period in the area. Some of his translations include: Grundzuge einer Bali Grammatik (1915) (elements of Bali Grammar; Tsu Mana (1909 -1910) (parables) No'u Nku'mu (1939) (church Constitution and Nwani Psalm ni tsu Ba'ni (1949) (church history).

Apart from the Baptists and the Presbyterians the Roman Catholic missionary also contributed to the development of translation in Cameroon. After arriving Cameroon in 1890, the German pallotine fathers led by Monsignor Henry Vieter opened a junior seminary in Einsiedeln (present day Sasse) in 1907, In this junior seminary those who were trained to become Catechists were taught German and Pidgin English to enable them to spread the Gospel to the Christian faithfuls since most of them could only understand pidgin English. The Germans left Cameroon prematurely in 1916 after their defeat in the First World war and by this time, the Pallotine fathers had trained 223catechists. Some Cameroonian catechists who had been trained went for further linguistic training in Germany and this resulted in the translation of the catholic prayer book from German into Ewondo. Monseigneur Vogt 1870-1943 is yet another catholic missionary who played an important role in the evolution of translation in Cameroon. He promoted the teaching of the Gospel in the national languages and by 1925 he published an Ewondo and French religious book under the title: Syllabaire Ewondo/Français. This book contained translations of religious dogma as well as historical information in both languages In 1965 when the Holy see authorised the Africanisation of the church, meaning that the Holy mass could be said in African languages. The decision had a direct impact on translation as most religious texts had to be translated into Cameroonian languages. These texts were translated into Ewondo, Bulu and Bassa.

With reunification in 1961 the two Cameroons which had experienced two inherited foreign cultures had to take a compromise decision of instituting English and French as Cameroon's official languages. Following this constitution, new nation – the Federal Republic of Cameroon was born, and it became very necessary to adopt an effective language policy for the country in order to protect the inherited Anglo-Saxon and French cultures.

English and French languages were adopted at the Fouban Constitutional Conference of July 1961 as the official languages of the new federation. “The above

constitutional provision instituting English and French as official languages gave rise to the need for translators. As a last resort, Cameroonians with the least linguistic competence in English and French languages were used as translators. A case in point is that of Eldridge Mohamadou (the polyglot) who served as John Ngu Foncha's interpreter (1962 – 1963) and as Ahidjo's interpreter and translator. Another case in point is that of Dr. Bernard Nsokika Fonlon (the first intellectual of his generation) who served in the Prime Minister's Secretariat in the former West Cameroon in 1961 and at the Presidency of the Republic as an interpreter in 1964. Ubanako (forthcoming) calls them natural translators and further says that in discussing the history of translation in Cameroon mention will always be made of their contribution and the role they played during the pre-colonial period. They did not receive any literate culture or formal training in translation, but were endowed with admirable linguistic competence. To effectively implement the Foumban constitutional conference on English and French bilingual policy, the Federal University was founded in 1962. In this same year the Department of Linguistics was created at the Presidency of the Republic of Cameroon to take care of official translation. The need for professional translators pushed the state to sponsor the training of Cameroonian translators and interpreters in Canada, America, etc.

By 1963 a Bilingual Secondary School was created at Man-a-war Bay (Victoria) in the then South West Province and later on transferred to Buea. A bilingual degree programme was later on introduced in the Federal University of Yaounde. This led to the training of bilingual Cameroonians who became teachers of French and English languages in secondary and high schools. Another laudable move by government to improve on the level of bilingualism was the introduction of the bilingual degree programme at the Higher Teacher Training College (E.N.S) Yaounde and annex Bambili. The Department of Linguistics at the presidency of the Republic rose to a Linguistic service by decree n° 80-281 of 23 July 1980.

The state later on created the Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters (ASTI) Buea in 1985.

With the return of Cameroonian trained translators on government sponsorship from abroad and the graduation of Cameroonian trained translators from ASTI Buea, the government recruited translators and sent to the Linguistic services of the Presidency of the Republic. As a result of too many translators at the Presidency of the Republic, and coupled with the poor quality of translations sometimes produced in the Ministries by intuitive translators, the government took a decision to transfer some translators to Ministries, thus leading to the creation of translation units in various ministries.

To further effect changes in attitudes, decree n° 85/1200 of 30th August 1985 instituted a project of teaching English language to civil servants of public and parapublic sectors, but it went operational in 1986. But in 1990 another decree n° 90/1196 of 30 August 1990 transformed the programme to teach English to civil servants to a popular bilingual training programme.

The provincial linguistic centres were created as follows: Douala in 1989, Buea in 1991, Bamenda and Ebolowa in 1995, Garoua in 2003 and Bertoua in 2006. The aim of these centres was to offer workers and ordinary citizens in the provinces the opportunity to learn English and French.

Institut Supérieur de Traduction et d'Interprétation Yaoundé ISTI, a private initiative under the able leadership of Dr Soh Tatcha Charles saw the light of day in 2006 under the authorisation of the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training in conformity with decision n° 2/MINEFOP/SG/DEOP of 28 February 2007. It is worth noting that the above school of translation was created by a group of 12 former students (1992 – 1998) batch of Higher School of Translation and Interpreters of the University of Sorbonne Paris.

On the 29 September 2010, the Minister of Higher Education authorised the functioning of Institut de Traduction et d'Interprétation, thus the name was modified to Institut Supérieur de Traduction et d'Interprétation (ISTI) Yaoundé. In 2011, a professional Masters programme in Translation and Interpretation of the Faculty of Arts, Letters and Social Sciences University of Yaounde I. The creation of translation schools in Yaounde has obviously given civil servants and workers of the private sector (including this researcher) who could not go to ASTI Buea (because of distance and time) to now work and still go to these institutions. Before concluding the historical perspective, it would be worthwhile highlighting the rough path that Associations of translators have taken to attain the present stage.

On Sunday the 25th March 1979, 41 professional translators and interpreters gathered at the conference hall of the chamber of commerce in Yaoundé with the sole aim of creating an Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters in Cameroon (ATIC). Its objectives were to promote professional ethics among members, to improve the quality of translation and interpretation, especially through the publication of articles and the organisation of conferences, to encourage the training of competent translators and interpreters, and to establish friendly relationship with similar professional bodies in Africa and other continents, and lastly to defend the interest of professional translators in Cameroon.

Unfortunately, ATIC never saw the light of day, because the 11 man executive members made up of Mr. Mbelem Wilfred, Madam Bassong Isabelle, Mr. Soya Zénon and Ngale Njume as President, Vice President, Secretary General and treasurer respectively never complied with the June 12 law on the freedom of association. Furthermore, some quarters expressed the opinion that ATIC also failed to take off, because the Ahmadou Ahidjo's regime was allergic to any form of unionism within the public service and therefore considered the creation of ATIC as a potential ground for trouble fermentation.

After the "abortion" of ATIC, another association of professional translators and interpreters was created ASTI ALUMNI ASSOCIATION (AAA). From every indication, AAA eventually disappeared. On 10 September 1994 there was the creation of APTIC (Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters of Cameroon. After the existence of APTIC for 17 years, CATIS was created in 2008 and ATTRIC in 2009.

Before 1890, no Cameroonian translator had translated and published any literary piece of work written by Cameroonians. Most of the translation was carried out by foreigners. There are examples of Ferdinand Oyono's «Une Vie de Boy » translated into English by John Reed as "House Boy" « Le Vieux Nègre et la Medaille » translated into English still by John Reed as "The Old Man and the Medal," the works of Rene Philombe translated by Richard Bjornson and the works of Mongo Beti by Gerald Moore include. A study of some of these translations showed that these foreign translators who had little or no knowledge of the Cameroonian culture and or society ended up doing translations which either gave a «contre sens» or nonsensical translation. For example, John Reed translated « baton de manioc» as cassava sticks. It is embarrassing to the English reader because we do not eat cassava sticks. Bobolo as it is called in Oyono's culture would have been better. In fact, it should be mentioned here that the 2011 batch (including this researcher) of the Higher Institute of Translation and Interpretation (ISTI) Yaounde in a course titled «TRADUCTION 401 » did a comparative study of «Une Vie de boy» and «Le Vieux Nègre et la Medaille» and their translations into English, and came up with a catalogue of social and cultural translation mistakes and incongruent translation expressions that have put these translations into question. This shows that a translator needs a background of the target language "culture if his or her translation has to make meaning to the audience of the target language.

In the 1990s, Cameroonian translators started translating literary works for example, Bityetiki's« La Colline aux Oiseaux »translated into English as" Tcholire The Mounts of

Birds" by Aatsa Atogho and Zesseu Tankwa Claude. Today there are many professional and experienced translators in Cameroon to salvage the situation.

The history of translation in Cameroon cannot be detached from reunification, because reunification gave rise to bilingualism. For bilingualism to be implemented, translation and interpretation then became a matter of absolute necessity.

## **2.6 EVOLUTION OF THE TRANSLATION PROFESSION IN CAMEROON**

It will certainly be a gross exaggeration to say that translation in Cameroon has been static. With the arrival of the colonial master some of them had to learn the local languages and even trained Cameroonians to study English and French to enable them act as translators and interpreters in churches and administration. During this period there were no formal translation schools. To concretise reunification the government took a number of decisions to foster bilingualism in Cameroon. These measures have already been mentioned in the preceding chapters. Government later on spent huge sums of money to train translators abroad. Although a lot has been done, more measures still have to be taken in order to make Cameroon a real bilingual country and to improve on the situation of translation in Cameroon. These measures shall be mentioned in chapter five.

## **2.7 PRESENTATION OF ASSOCIATIONS OF TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS OF CAMEROON.**

Cameroon is a member of the United Nations, and in respect of the United Nations charter, created the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms and Liberties. According to Article 20 of the National Commission on Human Rights and Liberties on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, every citizen has the right to freedom of peaceful associations and no one is obliged to belong to an association. In conformity with the

aforementioned Article, the National Assembly of Cameroon passed law No 90/053 of 19/12/1990 followed by its decree of implementation N0 92/455/PM of 23 /11/1992. The said law gave the opportunity for cultural, development and professional associations to be created. Aware of this law, translators in Cameroon decided to create an association called APTIC. After 15 years another association of translators called CATIS was created followed by the creation of the third one called ATTRIC. Given that this study is on the associations of translators and interpreters, we have deemed it necessary to present the said associations as follows:

## **A P T I C**

APTIC stands for Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters of Cameroon. According to APTIC constitution the said association was created on 10 September 1994. It is made up of mostly civil servants who are professional translators. It is made up of about 150 members who pay a yearly contribution of 50 000 FRS each. Its head quarters is in Yaoundé but can be transferred to any town in Cameroon on the decision of the National Assembly of the Association.

The main objectives as stated by the preamble of their constitution are : to bring together all translators and interpreters; to contribute to the training of competent translators and interpreters; to promote professional ethics among members; to protect the professional interest of its members; to ensure good quality translation and interpretation; encourage proper use of countries official languages; to drawing up and implementation of an official language policy and legislation on bilingualism; foster relation with professional organisations with the same objectives to encourage members to socialise among themselves, as provided for by a special instrument addressing APTIC's social activities.

Membership is limited to holders of a certificate in translation or a holder of a bilingual degree and who has effectively been practising translation or interpretation as a main

occupation for at least five years and is admitted by the General Assembly on the proposal of the admission and disciplinary board after a test as provided for by the Internal rules and regulations. Loss of membership shall be through death, resignation or through striking off the name as provided for by the internal rules and regulations. Membership is made up of active and honorary members. Active members are holders of a certificate in translation recognised by translation or interpretation recognised by the association or a holder of a first degree in Bilingual studies and who have effectively been practising translation or interpretation for at least 3 years and has completed his prescribed annual dues. Retired members are automatically considered as honorary members. The General Assembly can make anybody as an honorary member if that member contributes in an exceptional way to the translation profession or has distinguished himself in the translation profession. An honorary member is not obliged to pay contribution during deliberations and cannot be elected into the executive. Membership shall be lost through death, resignation and through striking off the roll decided by the General Assembly under the conditions provided for by the Internal Rules and Regulations. The organs of the association are the General Assembly and the Executive Bureau.

The General Assembly which is made up of all the members is the supreme organ of the association and can deliberate when one third of the members are in attendance. The functions of the General assembly are as follows: It shall adopt and amend the constitution and the internal rules and regulation of the association, defines and orientates the general policy of the association, adopts the agenda on the proposal of Executive Bureau; examines the progress report of the presented by the president on behalf of the Executive Bureau, the financial secretaries statement of account and the audit report; approves the accounts for the previous year; adopts the draft budget; admits suspends, strikes off the roll and rehabilitates members; elects members of the executive Bureau and the various boards; determines the

rates of annual dues on proposal of the Bureau members; approves management of the Executive Bureau; the association shall meet in ordinary session once a month at a venue and date to be determined by the Executive Bureau which shall duly inform members in writing at least 30 days in advance; the association may be convened in like manner in extraordinary session by the President upon decision of the Executive Bureau or at the written request of at least a third of the paid-up active members. Invitation to such extraordinary session which shall specify the object thereof shall be sent to all members 15 days prior to the date of Assembly.

The Association shall be administered by an Executive Bureau comprising a president, a vice president, a secretary General, an Assistant Secretary General, a Public Relations Officer; two technical Advisers and a disciplinarian. The Bureau shall convene the General Assembly and shall prepare an agenda which it shall submit to the General Assembly. Members of the executive bureau shall be for a mandate of 2 years. They shall be eligible for re-election. The election modalities shall be determined by the Internal Rules and Regulations. The executive Bureau shall meet twice a year and whenever convened by the President or at the behest of a third of its members. Decisions of the bureau shall be taken by absolute majority. In the event of a tie the President shall have a casting vote. Two thirds of members the Executive Bureau shall Court and all civil matters; Present the budget prepared by the executive bureau; authorise the expenditure of the association; present the progress report of the Bureau to the General Assembly; preside over the General Assembly and meetings of the Executive Bureau; protect the professional interest of the Association and its members; where he is unavoidably absent, the vice president shall deputise for him. The Vice President shall assist the president in his duties. The Secretary General shall run the Secretariat of the Association, especially during meetings of the General Assembly and the Executive Bureau. He shall keep all documents of the Association. The Assistant secretary General sits in for the Secretary

General in case the later is absent. The treasure shall collect the funds and carry out expenditure in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Internal Rules and Regulations. He shall countersign the cheques of the association. The Financial Secretary shall keep the records of the Association in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Internal Rules and Regulations. He shall present a financial report to the General Assembly. The public Relation officer ensures that the public has good image about the Association. The technical advisers assist the President in decision making. They make proposals which are likely to improve the situation of the Association. The President shall among other functions: ensure that the association functions in accordance with the constitution, convene and preside over meetings, authorise expenditure and sign cheques,

## **C A T I S**

CATIS stands for Cameroon Association of Translators and Interpreters Society. According to its own constitution, it was created in 2008 by mostly former members of APTIC with its headquarters in Yaounde. It is made up of ten executive members and presently has about 30 members. Its main objectives are: to bring together professional translators and interpreters, to promote professional ethics and professional deontology, among members; to defend interest of its members in professional matters; to ensure good quality translation and interpretation; promote good use of the two official languages; promote relations with professional groupings with the same objectives. Membership is made up of active and honorary members. Active members are holders of a certificate in translation recognised by translation or interpretation recognised by the association or a holder of a first degree in Bilingual studies and who has effectively been practising translation or interpretation for at least 3 years and has completed his prescribed annual dues. Retired members are automatically considered as honorary members. The General Assembly can make anybody as

an honorary member if that member contributes in an exceptional way to the translation profession or has distinguished himself in the translation profession. An honorary member is not obliged to pay contribution during deliberations and cannot be elected into the executive. Membership shall be lost through death, resignation and through striking off the roll decided by the General Assembly under the conditions provided for by the Internal Rules and Regulations. The organs of the association are the General assembly and the Executive Bureau

The General Assembly which is made up of all the members is supreme organ of the association and can deliberate when one third of the members are in attendance. The functions of the General assembly are as follows: It adopts and amends the constitution and the internal rules and regulation of the association, defines and orientates the general policy of the association, adopts the agenda on the proposal of Executive Bureau; examines the progress report of the presented by the president on behalf of the Executive Bureau, the financial secretaries statement of account and the audit report; approves the accounts for the previous year; adopts the draft budget; admits suspends ,strikes off the roll and rehabilitates members; elects members of the executive Bureau and the various boards; determines the rates of annual dues on proposal of the Bureau members; approves management of the Executive Bureau; the association shall meet in ordinary session once a month at a venue and date to be determined by the Executive Bureau which shall duly inform members in writing at least 30days in advance ;the association may be convened in like manner in extraordinary session by the President upon decision of the Executive Bureau or at the written request of at least a third of the paid-up active members. Invitation to such extraordinary session which shall specify the object thereof shall be sent to all members 15 days prior to the date of Assembly.

The Association shall be administered by an Executive Bureau comprising a president, a vice president, a secretary -General, an Assistant Secretary –General, a Public Relations Officer; two technical Advisers and a disciplinarian. The Bureau shall convene the General

Assembly and shall prepare an agenda which it shall submit to the General Assembly. Members of the executive bureau shall be for a mandate of 2 years .They shall be eligible for re-election. The election modalities shall be determined by the Internal Rules and Regulations. The executive Bureau shall meet twice a year and whenever convened by the President or at the behest of a third of its members. Decisions of the bureau shall be taken by an absolute majority. In event of a tie the President shall have a casting vote. Two thirds of members of the Executive Bureau shall decide on Court and all civil matters; Present the budget prepared by the executive bureau; authorise the expenditure of the association; present the progress report of the Bureau to the General Assembly; preside over the General Assembly and meetings of the Executve Bureau; protect the professional interest of the Association and its members; where he is unavoidably absent, the vice president shall deputise for him. The Vice President shall assist the president in his duties. The Secretary General shall run the secretariat of the Association, especially during meetings of the General Assembly and the Executive Bureau. He shall keep all documents of the Association. The Assistant secretary General sits in for the Secretary General in case the later is absent. The treasurer shall collect the funds and carry out expenditure in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Internal Rules and Regulations. He shall countersign the cheques of the association. The Financial Secretary shall keep the records of the Association in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Internal Rules and Regulations. He shall present a financial report to the General Assembly. The public Relation officer ensures that the public has good image about the Association. The technical advisers assist the President in decision making. They make proposals which are likely to improve the situation of the Association. The President shall among other functions: represent the association in legal matters, present the budget prepared by the executive members, approve expenditure, present a report of activities and preside over General assembly meetings.

## ATTRIC

ATTRIC stands for the Association of Translators, Terminologists, Revisers and Interpreters of Cameroon. ATTRIC was created in 2009 with headquarters in Yaounde. It is presently made up of five executive members and is soon expected to be officially launched, according to its Secretary General. It is intended to bring together translators, terminologists, revisers, interpreters, subtitlers and sign language interpreters. Its main objectives are as follows: to bring together translators, terminologists, revisers, conference interpreters, sign languages interpreters, and subtitlers; to enhance and ensure quality in the services rendered by its members to the public; to promote terminology research; to promote language and cultures through audiovisual media; to defend the interest of its members in their professional activities; to ensure continuous professional training of their members in order to increase the efficiency of their members in the competitive translation market; to organise a seminar on the national policy on bilingualism and its implementation in both public and private sectors; to support government in the conception and drawing up of legislation aimed at compelling all national television stations to adopt subtitling, sign language screen corner in news broadcasting in French and English for the interest of citizens with hearing disabilities.

Membership in ATTRIC is opened to any holder of a first degree who shows proof of having undergone training in translation, terminology, interpretation, or sign language, in an institution approved by government or in an institution abroad. Membership is also opened to those who have spent a minimum of 5 years on a full time translation job and those who fulfil the above conditions must pay membership dues to become active members. In addition to active members the Bureau can confer honorary membership to those who have distinguished themselves in research works in the domain of translation, writing, terminology, interpretation sign language, or must have rendered valuable services to the Association or to the translation profession at home or abroad. Honorary members are exempted from membership

contributions. Preapplication membership is opened to students of translation who intend to become full active members on completion of training and once admitted they must pay a membership fee of 30000frs .

Loss of membership occurs when: a member fails to pay his or her membership dues, through exclusion from the Association by the General Assembly meeting convened in accordance with the Internal Rules and Regulation of the Association, Any member facing exclusion has the right to be heard by the executive bureau or where appropriate. Any member is free to withdraw from the association after notification to the secretary General.

Organs of the association are: the Executive committee, the General assembly and commissions. The Executive committee is headed by a president (whose term of office is 2 years renewable), a Vice president (with a 2 year term and can replace the president incase there is vacancy), a Secretary General, a treasurer and two Auditors.

The Association can only be dissolved following the results of the General Assembly during an extraordinary meeting duly convened for the purpose and the dissolution must be approved by three quarters of members of good standing. Incase of dissolution, all property remaining after the settlement of debts shall be offered to a charitable organisation chosen by the General Assembly.

## **2.8 ASSOCIATIONS OF TRANSLATORS IN THE WORLD**

There are many translation Associations in the world with the mother Association found in the U.S but only a few shall be discussed as follows: International Federation of Translators (FIT), American Translators Association (ATA), and Society of translators and Interpreters of BC (STIBC), Canadian association of Translators and Terminologists and Interpreters Council (CTTIC) etc.

The International Federation of Translators is a mother translation association and has member associations in Europe (Belgium, France, Germany, and Greece etc), North America, South America, Africa etc. It enjoys protection from UNESCO (United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) following the UNESCO conference which took place in Nairobi on the 22 November during its 19<sup>th</sup> session and adopted recommendations on the legal protection of translators and translation and on the practical way of improving the conditions of translators.

The American Translators Association (ATA) which was founded in 1959 is the largest professional association of translators and interpreters in the USA with over 11 000 members in more than 90 countries. Its main goal is to foster and support the professional development of translators and interpreters and to promote the translation and interpreting profession. In addition, it lays down the rights and duties of translators as well as the basis for code of ethics; improve economic conditions and social climate in which the translator carries out his activity. It has a number of chapters, which operate locally and various national divisions based on specialisation. ATA is a member of IFT.

The Society of Translators and Interpreters of BC (STIBC) was founded in 1981 It is not an agency, but a professional body that serves to promote the interest of its members (translators and interpreters), all of whom follow a professional code of ethics. The society offers its members the opportunity to become certified either by exams or by presenting a dossier. Certified members have passed a rigorous test or presented a review of their professional work. In BC certified translators, certified court interpreters, certified conference interpreters and certified terminologists have title protection which means that by law, no one else is permitted to use these titles.

The Canadian Translators, Terminologists, and Interpreters Council (CTTIC) is a body of various provincial associations of translators, and appears to adopt a standardised system of

accreditation. Some other associations of transfers in the world include; Association of Translators and interpreters of Ontario (ATIO), Australian Association of translators and Interpreters (AUSIT), Argentine Association of Transistors and Interpreters.

Perhaps it should be noted that today translators associations span through specialised domains like legal translation, court interpretation, literary translation, economics, finance and banking translation etc. Consequently, you have associations like American Literary Translators Association (ALTA), Arizona court Interpreters Association (ACIA), Medical Interpreters Network of Georgia (MING), National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators.

## **2.9 TRANSLATION AND ETHICS**

Central to the establishment of any profession is the codification of its practices not only in organisational matters, but also and crucially, in matters of professional conduct. Adherence to a code of ethics represents an undertaking by the members of a profession that they can be relied upon to behave according to rules that protect the interest of their clients as well as those of their fellow members. The translation profession is not left out, and in some countries where translation is well organised the principles of code of ethics are classified into professional conduct, confidentiality, competence, impartiality, accuracy, employment, professional development and professional solidarity.

Under professional conduct, some standards of conduct and decorum are expected from translators and interpreters. In this light they are expected to be polite, courteous, unobstructive but firm and dignified at all times. It is therefore their responsibility to explain their role to those unaccustomed to working with them and to ensure that the conditions under which they work facilitate rather than hinder communication.

In the light of honesty, integrity and dignity translators shall not allow personal or other interest to prejudice or influence their work. Neither shall they solicit, accept gratuities or other benefits, nor shall they exercise power or influence over their clients. Reliability being important, translators shall adhere to appointment times and deadlines or in emergencies advise clients promptly as well as complete translation and interpretation assignments they have accepted. In case of disputes, interpreters and translators shall try to resolve them in a cooperative, constructive and professional manner, and shall refrain from behaviours which their colleagues would reasonably regard as being unprofessional.

Confidentiality entails that information gotten through translation and interpretation should be kept confidential. Such information can only be disclosed with the permission of the clients or when mandated by law. Where team work is required, it may be necessary to brief other translators or interpreters who are members of the team involved in the assignment. In such circumstances, the ethical obligation for confidentiality extends to all members of the team or agency. Information gained by interpreters and translators from consultations between clients and their legal representatives is protected under the common law rule of legal professional privilege. Interpreters and translators shall not subcontract work to interpreting and translating colleagues without permission from the client. Translated documents therefore remain the property of the client and shall not be shown or released to the third party without the permission of the client.

Competence requires that the translators and interpreters accept only jobs which they are competent to perform. Acceptance of a job is an implicit declaration of competence and constitutes a contract (oral or written). In the course of an assignment if it becomes apparent to the translator or interpreter that the expertise beyond their competence is required they shall inform the clients immediately and offer to withdraw from the assignment. Any alteration made to the work as a result of a second opinion and or review by other interpreters or

translators shall be agreed upon by consultation between the translators and interpreters concerned. Translators and interpreters shall not recommend to clients any business agency or process, or material matters in which they have a personal or financial interest without fully disclosing this interest to the clients. They shall also disclose all conflicts of interest including assignment for relatives or friends and those affecting their employers. If impartiality may be difficult to maintain because of personal beliefs or circumstances, they shall accept or shall withdraw from the assignments. Interpreters and translators are not responsible for what clients say or write. In addition, they shall not voice or write an opinion solicited or unsolicited on any matter or person in relation to an assignment. If approached independently by separate parties to the same legal dispute an interpreter or translator shall notify all parties and give the first party the opportunity to exclusive right to the requested interpretation or translating services. Concerning accuracy, the same access to all that is said by all parties involved in a meeting, interpreters shall relay accurately and completely everything that is said. This means that the interpreter shall convey the whole message, including derogatory or vulgar remarks as well as non verbal clues. If patent untruths are uttered or written, interpreters or translators shall convey these accurately as presented. Consequently, they shall not make additions to, or omit anything from their assigned work. If there are uncertainties in transmission and comprehension, interpreters and translators shall acknowledge and promptly rectify their interpreting and translating mistakes. In case any thing is unclear interpreters and translators shall ask for repetition, rephrasing or explanation. Interpreters shall ensure that speech is clearly heard and understood by everyone present. A short general conversation with clients prior to an assignment be necessary to ensure that clients and interpreters clearly understand each other's speech. In a law court, simultaneous interpretation for clients shall be whispered. Translators shall provide certification, if requested by their clients that their translation is true and accurate so far as they know. Certification shall include the clients

name, detail accreditation or recognition, language and language direction, and be signed and dated.

With regard to employment, interpreters and translators may be working in interpreting and translation assignments as independent (freelance) professional, or under contract to a commercial or government agency. If the code of ethics and an employing agency 's directions are in conflict interpreters and translators shall abide by the code of ethics and if necessary withdraw from the assignment. Concerning fees and payment, members are free to set their own rates and conditions. Most translation associations for example APTIC, provide a guide on information on ranges of rates to be charged by members. Interpreters and translators shall not accept gifts, tips in addition to the agreed fees. However, some discretionary latitude may be exercised in accepting a gift as a token as this is obligatory in certain clients cultures. Interpreters and translators shall be responsible for any services to clients or on behalf of clients by assistants or subcontractors employed by the interpreters or translators. Furthermore, interpreters and translators in the employment of another practitioner or interpreting and translating agency shall exercise the same diligence as in all professional contexts in the performance of their duties. Practicing interpreters and translators are expected to maintain and enhance their language skills by pursuing further relevant studies or attending seminars. They shall also maintain close familiarity with the languages and cultures for which they offer professional interpreting or translating expertise. Interpreters and translators shall continually endeavour to improve on their interpreting and translating skills. They should equally support and encourage the professional development of their colleagues.

Interpreters and translators shall support and further the interest of the profession and their colleagues and offer each other reasonable assistance where necessary. Consequently, they shall refrain from making comments injurious to the reputation of a

colleague. They shall therefore promote and enhance the integrity of the profession by fostering trust and between colleagues. Any difference of opinion among translators and interpreters shall be expressed with candour and respect, rather than by denigration.

## **2.10 TRANSLATION AND CULTURE**

Culture is one of those terms whose definition varies from one linguist, writer, or sociologist to another. From this researchers point of view culture can be defined as a way of life of a people handed down from generation to generation. A social scientist, Sir Edward Taylor (1891) as cited by Ubanako posits that culture is the complex whole of man's acquisition of knowledge, morals, customs, beliefs, arts, technology and so on which are shared or transmitted from generation to generation. No matter the perspective from which one looks at culture, it is very clear that culture has to do with a people and what they do. Since our environments influence our way of life, languages etc.our cultures are bound to be different given that we live in different environments endowed with different peculiarities. For example, an object that carries a particular meaning in one culture may not necessarily mean the same in another culture. An expression in a given cultural setting may not mean the same in another setting. For example, in Cameroon we talk of the Minister of Finance while the British call the same authority as the Chancellor of Exchequer. It is because of lack of the knowledge of the African culture that that the western translator rendered the equivalence of "kola nut" as chewing gum in "Mission to Kala " by Mongo Beti"or baton de manioc as cassava sticks in Ferdinand Oyono's" House Boy ", Given that translation pays attention to meaning and message it therefore becomes very challenging and sometimes difficult for a translator to master every aspect of ones culture to be able to create the same effect and or meaning from the source language to the target language. This accounts for borrowing and footnotes in some translations. One expression in two cultures can carry different meanings

and the translator can cause an embarrassment, chaos or conflict when he or she creates a different meaning to the audience of the target text. For example, a free woman in the Cameroonian context carries the meaning of a prostitute, but in Britain, it means not being under the confines of a prison. Imagine the embarrassment if the translator were to use the same word to mean the same when translating a text meant for a Cameroonian audience. It is therefore incumbent on the translator to be aware of the culture of the target language in order to avoid such incongruities. This can be minimised by reading widely, carrying out research and relying on a fellow translator when in doubt about the cultural peculiarities of his target text.

In translation, knowledge of the target text culture is therefore very primordial. It is therefore advisable for a western translator who is translating a literary text with an African setting to collaborate with translators of the said culture. The next chapter is devoted to the presentation of the various methods that we used in carrying out this research.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on: issues related to procedure of data collection, instruments used in the collection of data that provided the base of this study, processing and method of data analysis. The following methods of data collection have been used: questionnaires, interviews, library and internet sources, and observations.

#### **3.1 PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION**

Data for this study will be collected by carrying out library research, designing and administration of questionnaire to respondents, Interviews shall equally be carried out with some executive members of associations of translators. Internet sources will not be left out given the importance of modern information technology in research.

#### **3.2 LIBRARY RESEARCH**

Library sources provided us with a lot of valuable information for this study. We made use of the libraries of the Higher Institute of Translation and Interpretation (ISTI) Yaounde, the Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters (ASTI) Buea, the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) Yaounde and the University of Yaounde 1. They all provided us with rich information for this work. Specifically, these libraries provided necessary information for theoretical considerations and past dissertations for literature review.

#### **3.3 INTERNET RESEARCH**

Given the importance of information technology in modern research we found Internet sources very invaluable. These sources acted as a huge repertoire for information to enrich our theoretical considerations and literature review.

### **3.4 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS**

We made use of the following data collection instruments to collect the necessary data for the study: observation, questionnaire and interviews.

#### **3.4.1 OBSERVATION**

Observation was equally one of the methods of data collection which we used. In this light focus was more on the attitudes of respondents towards the questionnaire and the working conditions of translators. Firstly, we realised that some respondents felt very uncomfortable with our questionnaire and we had to convince them that the exercise was mainly for academic purposes. Secondly, we also observed that the working conditions of some translators in the public sector were below expectation. Some translation units could barely take a table and a chair for the unit head, and a little cupboard, and any attempt to bring in more than three people was already an embarrassment.

#### **3.4.2 QUESTIONNAIRES**

The second method which involved the use of questionnaires was aimed at collecting data from respondents who were mainly translators (professionals and non professionals). In this connection a questionnaire carrying 19 questions (found in appendix 1) was designed and administered to respondents and collected after they had been filled. It is worth mentioning that initially, a pilot test was carried out by administering only seven samples of the questionnaire to seven respondents. After collection and analysis, the following results were obtained: Out of 7 respondents only 4 were professional translators. The results of the pilot test revealed that out of 7 respondents, 5 were in favour of a multiplicity of translation associations. On the basis of such results, the initial topic was slightly modified and it now changed from: "one and indivisible association of translators and

interpreters in Cameroon: Is it imperative?” to “the contribution of associations of translators and interpreters to the development of the translation profession in Cameroon”.

This means that future researchers should not attempt to consider the multiplicity of associations of translators in Cameroon as a problem.

### **3.4.3 INTERVIEWS**

The next method consisted of an interview carried out with three executive members of APTIC, CATIS and ATTRIC. These executive members provided answers to the 10 questions that we prepared and are found in appendix 2. One of the major objectives of these interviews was to find out the activities that these associations have carried out since creation aimed at contributing to the development of translation in Cameroon. This is found on question 8 of appendix 2. One of the reasons was also to know their objectives vis à vis the translation profession and translators. This is found in number 7 of appendix 2. It was also to find out the objectives of the associations. The results of the interviews shall be revealed in our findings and discussions.

### **3.5 DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS**

The respondents of this study were those who work as translators in the public or private sector irrespective of sex, age, academic qualification, professional qualification or administrative position. We granted interviews to three executive members, each from one association of translators and interpreters in Cameroon irrespective of age, sex, academic qualification or administrative position held. There was a total of 51 respondents.

### **3.6 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS**

We used the descriptive statistical method, where responses and sets of responses from the administered questionnaires and interviews were counted and percentages worked out.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### 4.0 INTRODUCTION

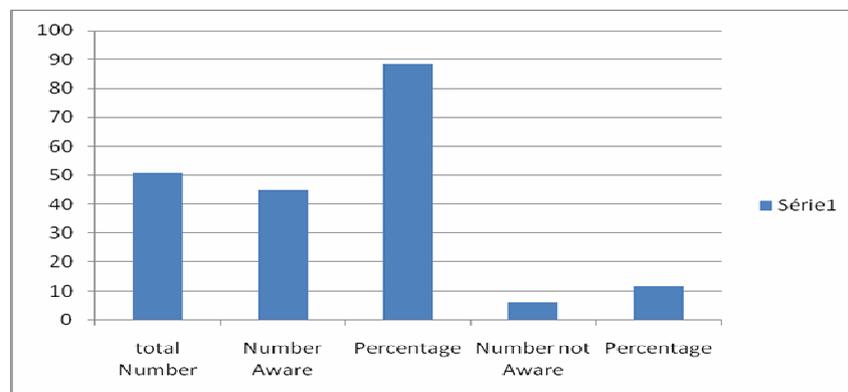
Data analysis stems from answers to questionnaires administered to respondents and interviews granted to three executive members of associations of translators and interpreters. After retrieving the administered questionnaires from the respondents, the following results in relation to the major questions were obtained. Out of a total of 52 questionnaires administered 51 were retrieved duly filled. Every effort to retrieve one of the questionnaires proved futile.

#### 4.1. DATA FROM QUESTIONNAIRE

Concerning the question on whether the respondents were aware of the departure of Cameroonian translators for greener pastures abroad, out of 50 respondents 45 acknowledged that they were aware of the departure and 06 indicated that they were not aware. This gives a percentage of 88.24 for those who are aware and 11.8 for those who are not aware. The high percentage definitely shows the alarming nature of the situation. This can be represented diagrammatically as follows:

Table 1: Awareness about the Departure of Translators for Greener Pastures

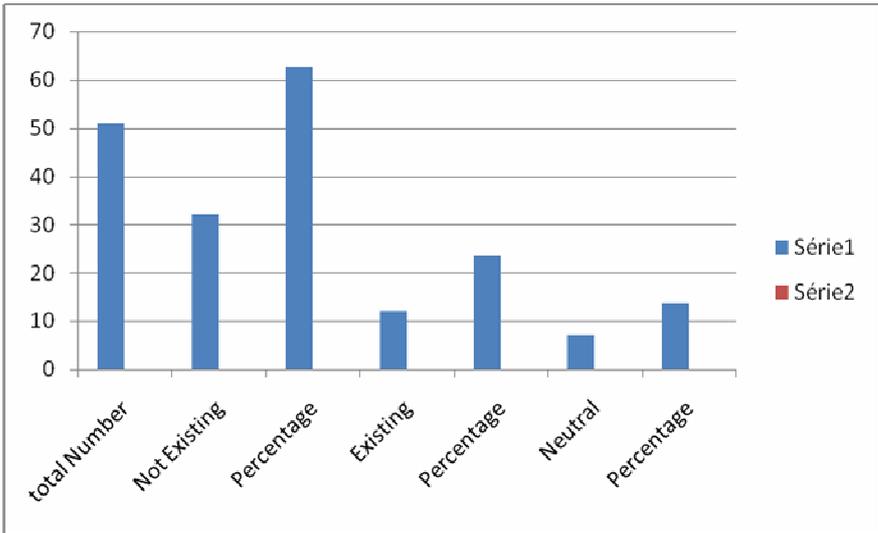
Total number of respondents	Number Aware	%	Number not Aware	%
51	45	88.24	06	11.8



With regard to question 16 which sought to know whether the respondents knew any institution that defines, organises and regulates the translation profession in Cameroon, out of a total of 51 respondents, 32 indicated that such an institution does not exist giving a percentage of 62.7%, 12 admitted that such an institution exists giving a percentage of 23.53 and cited the Department of linguistic Services at the Presidency of the Republic while 07 were neutral giving 13.7%. The high percentage from those who answered in the negative shows that they are aware that such an institution does not exist. The existence of such an institution is therefore necessary. Diagrammatically; this can be represented as follows:

**Table 2:** Awareness about an authority that defines, organises and regulates translation practice in Cameroon.

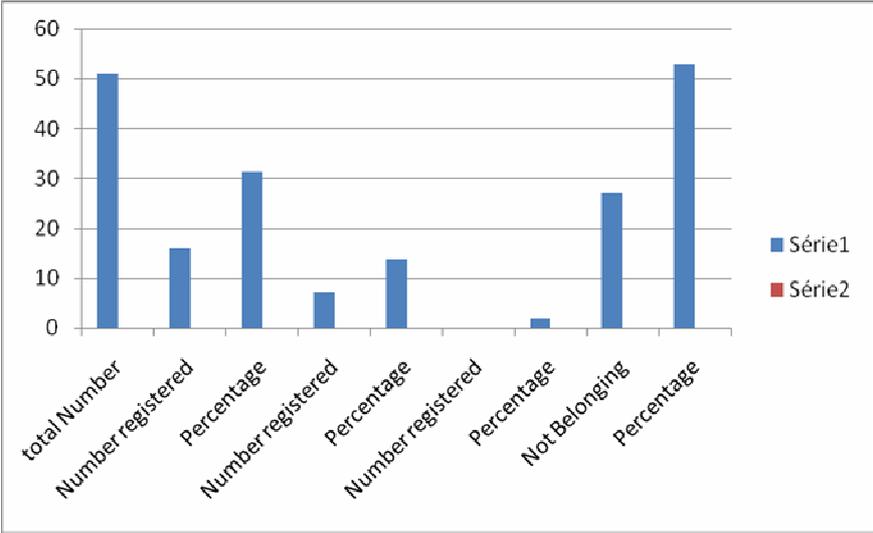
Total number of respondents	Not existing	%	Existing	%	Neutral	%
51	32	62.75	12	23.53	07	13.7



Another question sought to know whether respondents were registered with any of the three associations of translators and interpreters in Cameroon. Out of a total of 51 respondents 16 indicated that they were members of APTIC recording 31.27%, 07 for CATIS giving 13.72%, 01 for ATTRIC which is 1.96% and those who do not belong to any of the above associations are 27, making 52.94%.The high percentage of those who do not belong to any association probably manifests the disinterestedness of translators in belonging to any association. It can also be an indication that translation associations have not done enough sensitisation. The above can be represented in a diagram as follows:

**Table 3:** Number of translators registered with associations of translators

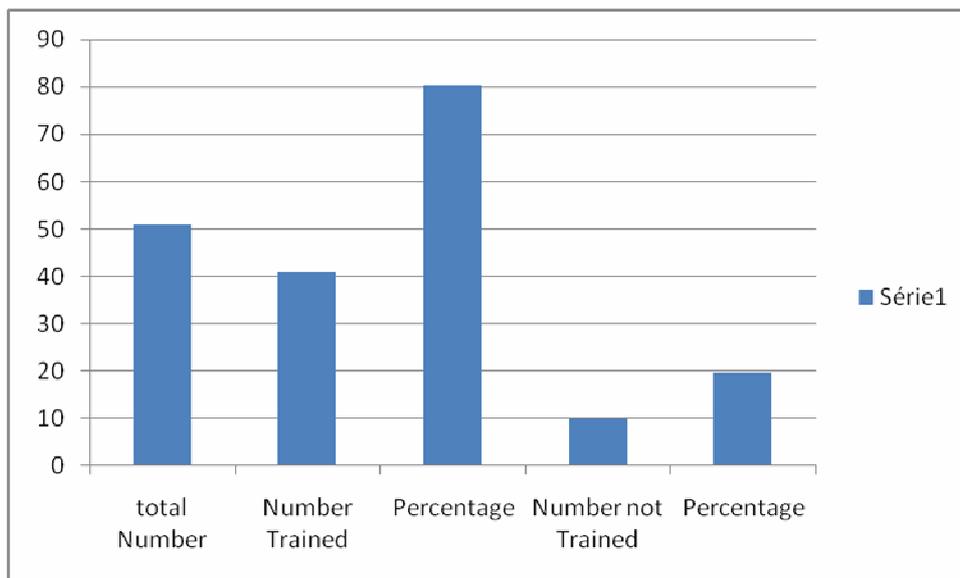
Total number of respondents	Number registered with APTIC	%	Number registered with CATIS	%	Number registered with ATTRIC	%	Number not belonging to any association	%
51	16	31.37	07	13.72	0	1.96	27	52.94



Concerning the question which sought to know whether the respondents were trained or not trained, the following results were obtained: Out of a total of 51 respondents, 41 indicated that they were trained and 10 acknowledged that they were not trained giving 80.39% and 9.6% respectively. A diagrammatical representation will appear as below:

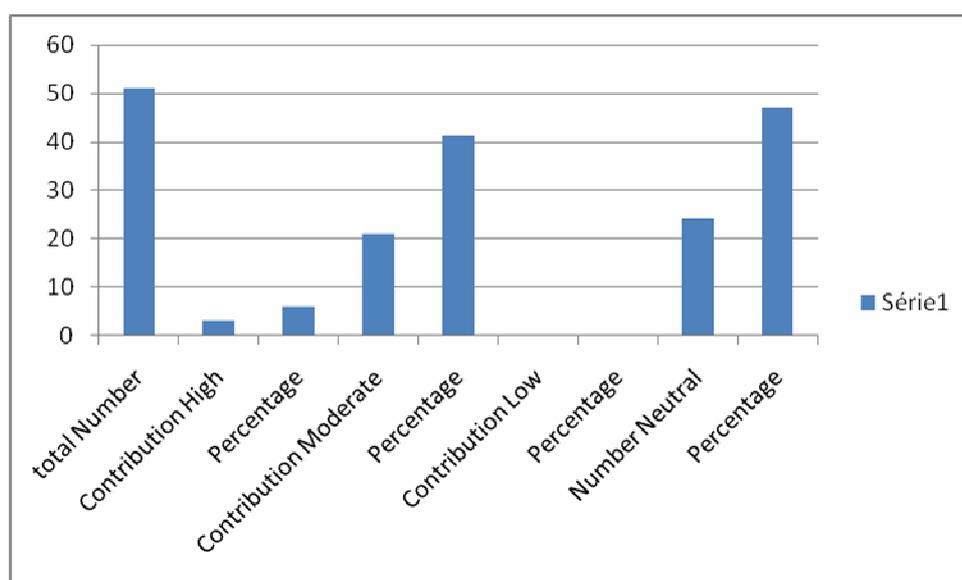
Table 4: Number of trained and untrained translators

Total number of respondents	Number trained	%	Number not trained	%
51	41	80.39	10	19.6



**Table 5:** Appreciation of annual contributions

Total number of respondents	Contributions are high	%	Contributions are moderate	%	Low Contributions	%	Number that is neutral	%
51	03	5.9	21	41.2	none	zero	24	47.1



## 4.2 DATA FROM INTERVIEWS

We interviewed a total of 03 executive members one from each association as follows: Mme Assako Leone of APTIC, Nchamukong of CATIS and Takougang of ATTRIC. Concerning the question on reasons for the creation of the associations, the following answers were obtained from the various executive members interviewed:

According to the executive member of APTIC the major objectives among others were to protect the interest of translators and to sensitise the public on the translation profession.

Answering to the same question the executive member of CATIS indicated that one of the reasons was the failure of APTIC to address the issues related to the translation profession but never relented efforts in the collection of annual dues of fifty thousand

francs. Another reason is also the failure of APTIC to address social issues like monthly thrifts and loan activities.

According to ATTRICs executive, their reasons were to defend the interest of translators of the private sector and freelance translators in particular since their problems are different from those of members of APTIC and CATIS who are mostly civil servants. For example, if private sector and freelance translators got involved in the fight for a better status and better working conditions for civil servants, of what advantage would it be to them.

As regards the question on the activities they have already carried out since the Creations of their associations the following answers were received:

According to APTIC's executive the association organised a seminar on legal translation. She equally added that the association runs a yearly directory and a quarterly magazine called APTIC forum and that APTIC goes to the radio once a year to talk about the translation profession.

On the part of CATIS executive member, he responded to the same question by saying that every year they participate in the commemoration of the international day of translators by sensitising the public on the profession through the radio.

Concerning the question on what contribution they have made to the development of translation in Cameroon, the following responses were obtained:

Reacting to the above question the executive member of APTIC said that once in a year the association sensitises the public about the profession through the radio. She mentioned the fact that the association had just organised a seminar on legal translation and trados in order to improve on the quality of translation in Cameroon.

Responding to the same question the executive member of CATI S said that the association is presently working on a draft text on language policy for Cameroon. He also

mentioned that CATIS is also working on a draft text on the creation of a National Order of Translators and Interpreters.

Answering the same question, the executive member of ATTRIC gave the impression that the association had just been legalised and is still to be officially launched.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **5.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents a summary of the research work and ends up analysing the key findings related to the hypothesis and the statement of problem, not leaving out some other shortcomings that hamper the development of translation in Cameroon. It equally presents recommendations and suggests topics for further research.

#### **5.1 SUMMARY**

This research work begins by examining the historical path that bilingualism and translation have taken to arrive the present day situation. We equally examined some theoretical considerations before making a review of some existing literature, Furthermore, we questioned the contribution of associations of translators in the development of translation and ended by focusing on recommendations and suggestions for research as a way of contributing to the translation profession.

#### **5.2 DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS**

Findings are discussed taking cognisance of the various instruments that we used in collecting the data. Consequently, we considered the major questions in the questionnaire and interviews granted to the executive members of the associations of translators. We equally considered our major findings through library research, internet research and observations.

##### **5.2.1 CONTRIBUTION OF TRANSLATION ASSOCIATIONS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSLATION.**

The results of our interview with the executive members of the associations of translators also revealed that they organised a seminar on legal translation and trados to enhance the performance of translators in Cameroon. This is a laudable effort, but when one

considers that APTIC has existed for over 17 years, one is tempted to believe that they have not lived up to expectation. It is probably for this reason that about 51% of our respondents does not belong to translation associations. Ntoumou (2009) is definitely not happy when she says that some of the executive members live abroad and she obviously wonders how they run the associations effectively.

## **5.2.2 ABSENCE OF AN AUTHORITY TO REGULATE TRANSLATION PRACTICE IN CAMEROON**

From our findings via the questionnaire 62.75% of our respondents acknowledged the absence of a structure which should define, organise and regulate translation practice in Cameroon. In relation to such a structure our interview with the executive member of CATIS revealed that there is a draft text in process on the creation of a National Order of Translators and Interpreters of Cameroon. But when we consider the fact that such effort is after 17 years of existence and we are still at the level of paper work on such a salient issue after 50 years of institutionalising bilingualism, we are tempted to say that these associations have made inadequate contributions to the development of translation in Cameroon.

The above move is equally a laudable effort towards the development of translation, but this is still paper work and one never knows when this will be translated into reality. It should be noted that Yuyen (1993) addressed the same issue with bitterness, but today, the same situation is still staring us at the face. Our interview with one executive member of CATIS revealed that one of the reasons why they created CATIS was because APTIC ( the first and oldest association) was more interested in the collection of annual dues of 50000frs from members rather than addressing issues related to the translation profession. Ntoumou (2009) shares the same opinion when she says: “Au terme de 15 années d ‘existence l’action de

association n'a pas pu aller au delà de la fixation du tarifs différentes prestations des services au Cameroun"“For 15 years this association has done nothing apart from preoccupying herself with determining translation rates for various services rendered by translators"( My translation)

This sounds like an overstatement, but the reality is that given their age and available finances they have performed below expectations. From observation we noticed that some translators of the public sector work under conditions which are below expectation. This possibly accounts for part of their departure for greener pastures.

### **5.2.3 APPOINTMENT OF NON PROFESSIONALS AS HEADS OF TRANSLATION UNITS**

We equally discovered that in some Ministries trained guidance councillors and trained Social Affaires Inspectors were appointed as heads of translation Units, Cameroon Tribune (2010). Talking to an informant (a certified translator) on the phone about the said issue he considered it normal in Cameroon given that it is an administrative appointment, and that such a person has professional translators to work under him. Another informant a lady equally shared the same opinion with the former. However, we would like to differ with their opinion. This is because in some Ministries, we found one trained translator who at the same time is the Unit head. The rest of the colleagues had gone for greener pastures. The question now is: Supposing such a Unit head is a trained guidance councillor or Social Affaires Inspector, how does he or she go about translation when his trained subordinates abandon him for greener pastures? Your guess is as good as mine. You can imagine the sort of translation that can come from such an office if such an administrator attempts to do the job of a translator. Can a social welfare professional be appointed as the head of a health district or a divisional chief of agriculture under the pretext that he or she has professionals to work with him or her If a

«chef de garage» is not a mechanic then you can imagine the consequences. This is obviously because there is no authority to question such a decision.

#### **5.2.4 REFUSAL TO FILL IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

We also observed that some bilingual degree holders working as translators felt very uncomfortable with our questionnaire and refused to fill them in. The questionnaire wanted to know whether they were trained translators. It also asked for their qualifications and where they were obtained. Some accepted to fill in the questionnaire only when we explained that the exercise was meant for academic purposes. The question that arises here is this: Is a bilingual degree training enough to make one a translator? What therefore is the need for another bilingual degree holder to sit for a competitive examination into a translation School, burn the midnight oil for two consecutive years, go through weekly and or semester continuous evaluations, write and defend a dissertation after research, let alone time and financial sacrifice involved. If they refused to fill in the questionnaire then it means that they are conscious of the fact that they are square pegs in round holes. This is possibly why an informant said that he had to remind his colleagues by writing on his office door: "Bilingualism is not equal to translation." However, opinions seem to vary on this particular issue.

### **5.2.5 SIDELINING TRANSLATORS**

From observations we noticed that some translators of the public sector were working under conditions which were below expectations. Some of the offices were poorly equipped, for example, some lacked modern electronic equipment like computers, printers etc. and in terms of space some of them could barely contain a table and a chair. Some complained of lack of a status for translators. Sometimes texts that are meant for translation units are instead given to relatives who are not translators just because of the instant financial compensation involved. The above reasons probably explain why some of them have left the country for greener pastures. It is interesting to note that when such translations are poorly handled it is then that the intervention of the professional is sought at the dying minute and the boss himself comes pleading and promising some compensation to the professional translator.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

This part of the research is aimed at presenting recommendations which can contribute to the development of the translation profession in Cameroon. These recommendations are made in relation to the problems highlighted in the preceding chapters.

#### **5.3.1 CREATION OF A NATIONAL ORDER OF TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS.**

There is the absolute need for the creation of a National Order of translators and Interpreters to define, organise and regulate the translation profession in Cameroon. This could be titled the National Order of translators, interpreters, terminologists, subtitlers and sign language interpreters. Given that draft laws are presented and defended in parliament by ministers, CATIS can lobby and submit the complete draft to the minister who will forward it

to Parliament. This shall be debated upon by parliament and later on promulgated into law by the President of the Republic. Translation associations can draw inspiration from the law governing the organisation and the practice of the National Order of Professional Engineers of Cameroon which is governed by:

«Loi n° 2000/09 du 13 juillet 2000 fixant l'organisation et les modalités d'exercice de la profession d'ingénieur de Génie Civil.

**Article 1<sup>er</sup>**: La présente loi fixe l'organisation et les modalités d'exercice de la profession d'ingénieur du Génie Civil, ci-après désigne "ingénieur".

**Article 4**: (1) Nul ne peut exercer la profession d'ingénieur de génie civil s'il n'est titulaire du diplôme d'ingénieur de génie civil et n'est inscrit au tableau de l'ordre national des Ingénieurs de Génie Civil ».

Such a law should be accompanied by penalties that shall befall defaulters. The major problem here shall be that of implementation. In this case the National Order of translators shall ensure the implementation of such a law.

### **5.3.2 REINFORCEMENT OF LANGUAGE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION.**

There is equally the need for a reinforcement of our language policy. Chumbow (1980:88) as cited by Ubanako affirms that our language policy is lacking in many respects because it was dictated by historical considerations and political requirements rather than emanating from careful planning based on a detail study of a wide range of socio-economic and social variables relevant to the state's development needs. The only way forward is the reinforcement of its implementation. According to (Ubanako 2010:118-121), there can be wonderful language policies but they will remain weak as long as there are no strong enforceable measures. He further expands by indicating that in Cameroon, measures should be enforced and every now and then, the policy should be evaluated in order to assess its

strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, he prescribes laws and sanctions for defaulters, to borrow from the Canadian example. Kiwoh (2011) shares the same opinion when he says:

“Implementation is a very important step in the process of language planning or policy. Generally, when a policy or planning measure is not implemented, it remains a statement of intent which has no effect on any one.

The absence of implementation seems to be typical of Cameroon, because in 1991 the then Prime Minister, Mr. Sadou Hayatou, in a circular letter n° 1/CAB/PM of 16 August 1991 stressed on the need for all ministers, all state departments, parastatals and municipal councils amongst others to publish all official documents intended for public consumption in both English and French languages. Since then this has remained a statement of intent which has no effect on any one, to borrow Kiwoh’s words. Implementation requires a law which spells out the penalty in form of money to be paid by the officials who violate the said law. In this case the Order of translators and interpreters should ensure its implementation. In Canada for example, there is an Act of 1985 respecting the status and use of the official languages of Canadian states which in its preamble states as follows:

“Whereas the Constitution of Canada provides that English and French are the official languages of Canada and have equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutions of the Parliament and government of Canada.” “Whereas the constitution of Canada provides for full and equal access to Parliament to the laws of Canada and to courts established by Parliament in both official languages”.

### **5.3.3 SENSITISATION OF THE PUBLIC**

The behaviour of the public vis-à-vis the translation profession gives the impression that there is the absolute need for sensitisation on the translation profession. Consequently, translation associations should join the Ministry of National Education to commemorate the National day of bilingualism by organising debates over the radio and television given that translation is linked to bilingualism. On the International Day of translation which comes up on 20<sup>th</sup> September every year, translation associations should sensitise the public on the translation profession. Most Cameroonians know that they need a lawyer in case of any litigation, but very few know that each time they have a document to be translated they need to go for a translator.

### **5.3.4 AFFILIATION TO IFT**

Associations of translators and interpreters of Cameroon are advised to register with the International Federation of Translators (IFT) in order to benefit from the advantages that go with such an affiliation. FIT is a non-governmental international organisation founded in Paris in 1953 under the impulse of Pierre – François Caillé. It is recognised by UNESCO where it enjoys the highest consultative status.

Lastly, we would like to recommend to authorities of translation schools to encourage students to do social science research. Most past thesis were on glossaries and on commented translation and terminology, We are convinced that if the above recommendations are implemented this will go a long way to ameliorate the situation of translation in Cameroon.

#### **5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The domain of Translation is still very fertile for research particularly in the area of social science research topics like the one under study. Most researchers from translation schools prefer research on glossaries and commented translation. Researchers can therefore venture into the following areas of translation.

One of such studies could focus on the characteristics of poetic translation. The choice of topic stems from the fact that while carrying out research in the mother translation school (ASTI – Buea) and ISTI – Yaounde we realised that most researchers from translation schools shy away from poetry translation.

Another area which could be researched into is on “machine translation, a threat to the translation profession.” The researcher could question whether the translation profession will stand the test of time in the advent of these soft wares. This area is provoked by the fact that most adventurers hurriedly go for these soft wares like Sistran, Google, etc. But no sooner have they discovered the weaknesses of such nonsensical translations, that they rush to professional translators for rescue. Sometimes, the weaknesses of these translations are discovered by the owners of the text after the so-called translator has been paid. The only solution is to rush to a professional translator. This researcher has been approached with two of such cases.

Translation/interpretation and the media can be another interesting area for research. The researcher can focus on the role of translators and interpreters in the audio-visual landscape. In most cases journalists instantly transform themselves into translators and interpreters. This gives rise to sight translations over CRTV Radio and Television (from English journalists) such as agricultural vulgarisation instead of agricultural extension or forest exploitation in Cameroon instead of logging in Cameroon.

Researchers can also delve into a topic such as, the relationship between the theory of translation and translation practice. The researcher could seek to carry out a study on the role of translation theory in the practice of translation. This could go a long way to throw more light on whether one needs to read translation theory in school to be able to function well as a translator.

Furthermore, translation as a risky profession can also be studied. The researcher can find out whether the translator's life can be in danger just like that of the journalist. This topic is triggered by the claim that Dolet 1509 – 1546 was hanged while young, because he was found guilty of distorted translation of Plato's works. It is also believed that one of the World wars was caused by translation which gave a different message from the intended message.

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