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Addressing Trainees' Diversity Conundrums in Translator Education: Towards a Responsive Pedagogy

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ABSTRACT

This paper assesses the impact of some trainee translators' background factors on their learning outcomes by highlighting the challenges that diverse classrooms pose for translator trainers. The study demonstrates that psycho-socio-educational and professional background factors such as educational and linguistic backgrounds, prior-work or professional experiences, socio-economic status and home learning environments, perceptions and dispositions towards translation learning, as well as expectations, levels of satisfaction and loyalty provide an explanatory background to the process of translation production and performance of most translation students. The data for this study is drawn from 60 students of the MA Programme in Translation at the Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters (ASTI) of the University of Buea in Cameroon. The data reveals that students' performances vary significantly with these background characteristics. The study posits that responsive pedagogy in translator education can only grow out of an understanding of students' background, whereby the strengths and weaknesses that students bring to school are identified, nurtured and utilized to promote student achievement.

Keywords: Trainee Translators, Psycho-socio-educational Background, Prior-work Experience, Translation Performance, Translation Achievement

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1. Introduction

Many studies on the challenges of higher education today, use students' individual differences as a framework for effective pedagogy in education. As increasing number of students from diverse backgrounds populate 21st century classrooms, and efforts mount to identify effective methods to teach them, the need

for a more humanizing pedagogy becomes more patent (Bartolome, 1994). Data from PISA (2003, 2006) indicate that educational challenges posed by students' background factors such as, family background, socio-economic context, and psycho-sociological characteristics strongly impact on their learning outcomes and constitute the main determinants of students' performances



over and above the influence of the school itself. In this vein, all teachers are called upon to create a classroom culture where all students regardless of their backgrounds are welcomed, supported, and provided with the best opportunities to learn.

It seems that more attention has been paid to the institutional and instructional components of training for a long time and very little on the social, cognitive and emotional parameters, which are the major determinants of students' diversity. More so, discussions on strategies that teachers can adopt in order to become responsive to the needs of these students are scanty in the literature, particularly of translator training. This study sets out to fill this gap by highlighting the challenges that classrooms with diverse student populations pose for translator trainers. In effect, success in translator training is largely dependent on the declarative knowledge-base that students bring into the translator training programme.

This study started from an appraisal of the poor performances of students at the end of course examinations at the Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters (ASTI) of the University of Buea, Cameroon. Results have been on a downward trend for close to two decades as witnessed by the low number of students who graduate at the end of their two regular years of studies (Sakwe, 2013). Even though all students admitted into the institution are graduates with at least a BA degree in any discipline and selected through a competitive entrance examination, their comparative performances do not measure up to the instructional efforts of teachers. This study therefore sought to investigate trainees' personal impact factors on the learning process that can inform on responsive pedagogy. The following research

questions were posed: How do the different socio-educational and linguistic backgrounds of trainee translators impact on their learning outcomes? To what extent are ASTI students affected by their socio-economic backgrounds? What is the impact of some trainees' prior-work experiences on their translation performances? What are trainee translators' perceptions and dispositions towards professional translator training in ASTI, and how do these affect their learning outcomes? What are the expectations and felt needs of trainee translators in ASTI?

In effect, the study aims to investigate the diversity concerns of students in Translator Training. It hypothesizes that translator training needs and methods cannot be defined outside trainees' urgent needs and background characteristics respectively, because these factors are responsible for trainees' learning outcomes.

2. Literature Review

The trainees' diversity problem in translator training is discussed using insights from the literature on translator education, experiential learning, socio-educational and psychological theories, as well as performance analysis. Within this theoretical framework, the concept of learner diversity itself has been deconstructed into the educational, professional, social and psychological dimensions.

2.1 Socio-educational and Linguistic backgrounds

Studies on the effect of learners' differences have been discussed in the domain of translation studies, particularly in the works of Think Aloud Protocol (TAP) methodologists and in cognitive translation studies. Way back in the seventies, Lambert (1972) opined that trainees' translation competence was largely predicated on their bilingualism,

that is, the degree and type of bilinguals that they are. According to Lambert, trainees' bilinguality, that is, their individual cognitive bilingual abilities and aptitudes have the effect of providing them with special forms of prior knowledge, sensitivity and skills which are indispensable for the successful learning of translation.

This view seems to be valid even today. In many Translator training institutions in the world, particularly in ASTI, trainees are admitted from a wide variety of subject fields and their language proficiencies (a prerequisite for Translation Studies) vary according to their backgrounds. A study carried out by Groot and Poot's (1997) on the relationship between the translation process and bilinguals (L1 is Dutch, and L2 is English) with different proficiency levels, revealed that less fluent bilinguals greatly depended on word association translation, which is based on a semantic approach, and that bilinguals of various L2 fluency levels accessed and applied conceptual memory representations into their translation most of the time. Recent studies have proven that these varying levels of language proficiencies explain why differences in acquiring the working languages can affect the translator's manner of translating (Sakwe, 2014).

It has also been established that an educational discipline has a direct consequence on learning styles and on teaching methods. In this vein, Kolb's (1999) study demonstrated that people with undergraduate majors in the Arts, History, Political science, English, and Psychology tend to have *diverging* learning styles. They have broad cultural interests and like to gather information. On other hand, people majoring in more abstract and applied areas like Physical Sciences and Engineering have *converging* learning styles. In formal

learning situations, people with this latter style prefer to experiment with new ideas, simulations, laboratory assignments, and practical applications.

The findings in these studies have a direct implication for translator training. What can be deduced from the discussions is that a translator trainer's knowledge of the distribution, and range of language proficiency and intellectual abilities of trainees in the class can enable him to pitch the initial level of his teaching. It can also enable him to understand the pace of learning of his students, and to individualize instruction for students of varying ability. What this seem to suggest is that, where increased institutional support is given to trainee translators' educational and linguistic profiles, more positive attitudes towards learning translation can be expressed overtly and quantitatively.

2.2 Socio-economic status and home learning Environments

In an earlier work on this subject published by Kuethe (1968), he postulated that the socio-economic status of the family can shape a student's attitude, which in turn can influence his learning outcomes. According to him,

In homes where a student hears education described as a waste of time, where teachers are regarded as busy bodies, and where the adults constantly talk about unpleasant aspects of their school experience, the student acquires an attitude that will give him an almost insurmountable handicap at school. (p. 7)

A similar view was expressed in a later study by Ellis (1994). Ellis (1994) opined that the learner's socio-economic class "determines the learning opportunities which individual learners experience" (p. 197). The views expressed in these earlier works were corroborated by Becker (1993). This latter work demonstrated that household resources are directly linked to



an investment in the educational attainments of the students. According to Becker, achievement depends on how much is invested in the students and per student.

It seems feasible to postulate from these studies that the increasing failure rates in translator training institutions like ASTI cannot only be attributed to the inability of the training institutions to meet students' expectations. It may also be attributed to the school-community partnership which is increasingly becoming weak or almost absent. A More recent study on the topic by DoubleGist (2013) confirms that nowadays, schools have been abandoned to battle alone with the responsibility that the family and communities were expected to assume, that of conjugating efforts to support students' academic work. In effect, as Seeborg (2002) rightly opines:

Income is a variable, which can determine what resources are available to a household. As income increases, consumer products, which enhance human capital, are more abundant in the household. The opportunity to purchase and use learning devices such as computers, and encyclopedias, are more common. The presence or absence of educational resources due to income may support or discourage student's interests in learning. (p. 27)

2.3 Prior Professional or Work Experience

One major advantage of prior professional experience is described in a study carried out by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development–DEECD (2008). According to this study, prior work experience provides the essential hands-on practical experience that enables students to appreciate the relevance of what is learned at school or college. This view is confirmed by Breathnach (1983) cited in Blackwell (2002) in his study of 22 co-operative programmes and 16 conventional programmes. The results of this study

proved that prior professional experience links theory and practice by giving a greater meaning to study. This means that students' learning and achievement can increase when their teachers engage in effective professional development that is focused on employability skills and students' major learning challenges towards attaining such goals.

In Translation Studies, Dorothy Kelly (2015) discusses the phenomenon. She demonstrates that it has become increasingly common in the university system for programmes to credit prior work experience (especially for mature students). She postulates that work experience is a beneficial part of the curriculum that contributes to higher standards and to the nation's store of human capital. In effect, Think-Aloud methodologists in Translation Studies have insisted on the role of cognitive complement, which consists in summoning up extra-linguistic and encyclopedic knowledge at the right time so as to produce a translation which is accurate and logical.

Some areas where the importance of trainee translators' prior experiences can be assessed include: instrumental and professional areas (application and appraisal of technology to professional translation), work procedures and flows (professional ethics); the interpersonal area (team work, working relations with other professionals, including revisers); the attitudinal (self-concepts as a translator, confidence, taking on responsibility, autonomisation of professional routines); and the strategic area (organization of work flow, problem identification and solving). The link between translator education and life can be established when the teacher helps students to integrate the idea of becoming professional translators into their life project.

2.4 Perceptions and Dispositions towards Translation Learning

Students' attitudes and motivation have frequently been reported to be the most critical factors for success in education. Studies on learners' attitudes abound in educational psychology research. Gagné (1985) defines an *attitude* as a mental state that predisposes a learner to choose to behave in a certain way. For instance, an individual's dislike of mathematics may cause him to choose to avoid all courses that contain a maths component. This means that attitudes play a major role in learners' motivation to persevere in learning. Motivated or demotivated translation students, for instance, have different perceptions of their class, teacher, and the curriculum. Thus, the existence of conflicting perceptions and ill-adapted dispositions may largely account for the increase in poor learning outcomes.

For these reasons, scholars like Rogers (1961) have argued that human beings have unique experiences which must be taken into consideration during the learning process. In his seminal work on the subject, Rogers (1961) argued for a number of conditions that must be made available in the teaching-learning process if significant learning is hoped for. He recommends empathy and unconditional positive regard of the learner's genius in the teaching-learning transaction. In consonance with previous research, Akey's (2006) study on school context, students' attitudes, and academic achievement indicates that both engagement in school and students' perception of their own academic competence, influence achievement in mathematics for high school students.

Based on these results, it is plausible to state that students' attitude and motivation are associated with educational achievement. This is the area where

teachers and students in Translator Training seem to have conflicting sets of expectations as far as achievable educational goals are concerned. Many translation students in ASTI, for instance, evince certain coldness towards translation as a scholarly discipline and erroneously see it as a mechanical thing. Viewed as simply a mechanical exercise, some students tend to be resistant towards the learning of broad-base professional translation skills, which some consider unnecessary. The debate on what should constitute the standard translator's profile has been discussed in Sakwe (2015).

The teacher who warmly accepts and provide unconditional positive regard and empathy instead of fear, anxiety and discouragement, sets adequate conditions for learning.

2.5 Expectations, Satisfaction and Loyalty

Understanding and managing students' expectations is one of the major roles of Higher Educational institutions to provide a satisfactory and effective learning experience. According to Hill (1995) there is a need to gather information on students' expectations during their time at the university and also at the point of arrival and before graduation. (p. 10). This is imperative because it can be that teachers, like students, may have unrealistic expectations of the contemporary teaching relationship. This view is shared by Yeo (2008) who states that "Management of student expectations is fundamental to ensuring appropriate service quality in higher education" (p. 266).

Studies on the subject have yielded results that can be invested into teaching for greater outcomes. In a recent study carried out by Mamun and Das (1999), results revealed that factors that would attract students are library facilities, laboratory facilities and internship assistance. These



are some of the key factors of students' satisfaction. Students spend a considerable amount of their time using these university facilities, which provide potential opportunities to influence their satisfaction. Another more recent study done by Hague et al (2011) also identified independent factors that can affect students' satisfaction based on services offered by universities. These include: the quality of teaching, student research facilities, library book collections and services, campus infrastructure, canteen facilities, space for group discussion, sport programmes, ICT (PC and Internet) facilities etc..

It can be deduced from these studies that identifying where gaps exist in Translator Training would not only gauge the overall level of satisfaction, but will reveal specific areas where improvements can be made to raise the level of student satisfaction and therefore the success of the service offered.

3. Methodology

This study is illustrated with a case study survey that makes use of an ex-post facto/quasi-experiment. It adopts a descriptive, semi-experimental, a meta-analytic research design, and is correlational. Suggestions are made in the light of the survey results for responsive teaching.

The study's population comprised 60 students of the MA degree programme in the Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters (ASTI) of the University of Buea in Cameroon. The data collecting instruments used in this study were questionnaires, protocol language and translation tests, focused group discussions, and archival documentation. These documents included portfolio sources on students and admission formalities into ASTI. The questionnaire for trainee translators was made up of fifty-two open

and close ended questions which were classified into five sections: socio-educational and linguistic background, socio-economic status of ASTI learners, prior-work or professional experience, learners' perceptions and dispositions, and expectations and satisfaction of trainee translators in ASTI. Focused group discussions involved only students with prior-work experiences.

4. Results and Analysis

This section presents the survey results of the above five (5) psycho-socio-educational and experiential variables identified in this study.

4.1 Socio-educational and linguistic background

The section attempts an answer to the first research question: How do the different socio-educational and linguistic backgrounds of trainees' impact on trainee translators' performances? More specifically, do variations in trainees' ability to translate related their various socio-educational and linguistic backgrounds? Is the quality of translation performance predicated on the degree of trainees' bilingualism? Do differences in acquiring the working languages (coordinate or compound bilingual) explain the trainee's manner of translating?

Table 1. Trainees' Socio-educational and linguistic Profiles

No.	Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Sex	Male	21	35
		Female	39	65
2.	Nationality	Cameronians	52	86.6
		Foreigners	8	13.4
3.	Language Combination	English A / French B	33	55
		French A / English B	27	45
		French A-English B-German/Spanish C	6	10
4.	Highest Qualification	First Degree	41	68
		Masters Degree	18	30
		Ph.D.	0	0
		Maitrise	1	2.0
5.	University attended	Yaoundé 1	21	35
		Yaoundé 2	01	1.6
		Douala	04	6.6
		Buea	20	33.3
		Dschang	06	10
		Ngaoundere	00	00
		Others	08	13.3
		Total	60	100
6.	First Degree background	Bilingual Letters	30	50
		Linguistics	4	6.6
		Languages	5	8.3
		Literature	1	1.6
		Geography	1	1.6
		Education	1	1.6
		Banking and Finance	1	1.6
		Economics	1	1.6
		Law	4	6.6
		Women and Gender	3	5
		Studies	2	5.5
		Political Science	1	1.6
		Communication	3	5
		Trilingual letters	1	1.6
		Sociology and Anthropology	2	5.5
		7.	Language Orientation	Anglophone
Francophone	24			40
French A-English B - German/Spanish C	6			10
8.	Type of Bilingual	Coordinate	37	61.6
		Balanced	23	38.4
9.	Duration in ASTI	1 year	18	30
		2 years	30	50
		3 years	10	16.6
		Above 3 years	2	3.4

The majority of the students are Cameroonians (86.6%) and holders of BA degrees in several disciplines from six of the eight (8) state universities in the country. Of the 60 respondents, 30 of them, (that is 50%) are graduates from various disciplines. Most students are coordinate bilinguals (61%), that is, their second languages were learned mostly in school. Some students have spent more than the regular two (2) years in school.

The next results assess students' performances against their socio-educational and linguistic Backgrounds.

Table 2. Correlation of End of Year Results with Linguistic Knowledge-Base of Students

No	Variable	Description	Mean Marks/25		
1	Performance in English Test	Advanced Functional and Contrastive Grammar Comprehension and Text analysis Terminology and intercultural semantics Translator-specific writing skills			10.23
					11.65
					12.23
					11.78
2.	Performance in French Test	Graphie et construction Vocabulaire et sens Reformulation Grammaire			13.6
					12.7
					14.8
					7.7
3	Performance in Translation Test	Anglophone Bilingual Francophone Bilingual Non-Bilingual Subjects			52.8
					51.0
					46.6
4	Stratified Mean Results of Language and Translation	Anglophone Bilingual Francophone Bilingual Non-Bilingual Subjects	English	French	Translation
			49.6	40.5	52.8
			35.3	58.3	51.0
			36.9	46.9	46.6
5	Bilinguality	Coordinate Bilingual	46.5	53.0	51.6
		Balanced Bilingual	45.3	46.7	44.5

These results demonstrate that ASTI has witnessed an increase in the number of students who obtain their degrees in various subject fields than languages. The non-bilingual degree holders perform very poorly in languages and in translation with a mean score of 41.9%. This shows that there is a systematic relationship between language scores and subsequent translation scores. In other words, the higher the prior language scores, the higher the subsequent translation scores. Furthermore, coordinate bilinguals perform better than balanced bilinguals in translation.

4.2 Socio-economic status and home learning Environments

This section attempts an answer to the second research question: To what extent do socio-economic factors impact on trainee translators' performances? More specifically, how do the socio-economic status and family size impact on students' performance in translation? How do parental education and attitudes affect students' performance in translation? What is the impact of the home learning environment on performance in translation? *Table 3. Trainees' Socio-economic Status and Home-learning Environments Profiles*



No	Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Parent's occupation	Teachers	10	16.6
		Medical doctors or nurses	05	8.3
		Farmers	08	13.3
		Accountants	05	8.3
		Engineer	05	8.3
		Others	27	45
			60	100
	Parents Educational Levels	F.S.L.C	05	08.3
		O/L or CAP	07	11.6
		A/L or BACC	15	25.0
		BA and above	22	36.6
		Didn't go to school	11	18.3
			23	38.3
2.	Parents Give them Sufficient Financial Assistance.	Yes they do	23	11.6
		No they are unable. I do part time	7	11.6
		No they are unable. I don't do part time	19	31.6
		Sponsor my self	10	16.6
3.	Place of Study at Home	In a study room for me alone	20	33.3
		In a room used by other people as well	22	36.7
		Others	18	30
4.	Frequency of Watching the News	Never	04	6.6
		Seldom	18	30
		Often	14	23.3
		Very often	24	40
5.	Whether they Own a Computer	Yes	54	90
		No	06	10
6.	They Buy and Read Newspapers	Never	6	10
		Seldom	18	30
		Often	17	28.3
		Very often	18	30
		No response	01	1.6

The statistics in Table 3 above reveal that most students' parents are engineers and farmers (45% and 16.6%) respectively. Some of them hold a BA (36%) and above while over 64% hold qualifications below the BA level. Also, only 38% of these postgraduate students receive financial assistance from parents. The rest fend for themselves (62%). Furthermore, only a few students can afford rooms of their own (33.3%). The majority live in crowded rooms.

The next section correlates end of year results with the socio-economic status of students.

Table 4. Correlation of End of Year Results with Socio-economic Status

S/ N	Socio-economic Background	Total Number Passed	No. of Respondents Affected	No. Affected Passed	No. Affected Failed	Percentages of No. Passed	Percentages of No. Affected
1	Respondents from Working class	23	37	8	29	21.62	
2	Don't receive sufficient financial assistance	23	26	6	20	23.07	
3	Receive sufficient financial assistance	23	23	11	12	47.82	
4	Live 2 - 4 km+ away from school	23	32	14	18	43.75	
5	Live less than 1 km away from school	23	27	9	18	33.33	
6	Parents didn't go to school	23	10	3	7	30	
7	Parents' highest qualification=FSLC	23	5	1	4	20	
8	Parents' highest qualification=O/L	23	7	3	4	30	
9	Parents' highest qualification=A/L	23	15	5	10	33.33	
10	Parents' highest qualification=BA+	23	22	12	10	54.54	
11	Own a study room for me alone	23	20	11	9	55	
12	Shared a study with others permanently	23	39	12	27	33.33	
13	Own a TV set+	23	48	19	29	39.58	
14	Don't own a TV	23	11	4	7	36.36	
15	Watch news regularly	23	24	15	9	62.5	
16	Often disturbed at home	23	51	18	33	35.29	

Table 4 reveals that out of the 60 respondents in this study, 37 were from the working class. Out of the 23 who passed, only 8 (21.62%) were of this group. Furthermore, 11 respondents out of the 23 (47.82%) who received sufficient financial assistance passed, while 6 out of the 26 (23.07) who do not receive sufficient financial assistance passed. Also 10 respondents were from homes where parents never went to school. Out of this number, only 3 (30%) passed. Out of the 5 from homes where parents have the FLSC as highest certificate, only 1 (20%) passed. Also, out of 15 who had a parental education level of the A/L, 5 (33.33%) passed. Consequently, out of the 37 respondents with poor parental education level (between no certificate and the A / L), 13 were successful (32.43%) while 12 out of 22 (54.54%). respondents with high parental education level (BA+) passed. The number of respondents who were successful rose with the increasing parental educational level and support.

4.3 Students' Prior Professional Experiences

This section attempts an answer to the third research question: Do students with

prior professional/work experience in ASTI perform better in translation than those with no prior professional experience? Why do students with prior professional experience perform better than those with no prior professional experience? What are the implications of prior professional experience on students' performance?

Table 5. Trainees' Prior Professional Experience Profiles

No.	Variable	No.	TRA 601	TRA 603	TRA 602	TRA 604	TRA 617	TRA 619	TRA 618	TRA 620
1.	PED. INSPECTOR	1	40	70	51	70	50	76	60	67
2.	POLICE FORCE	5	61.4	67	71.6	64.2	54.4	61.2	53.6	59.6
3.	SONARA STAFF	1	41	71	48	56	0	61	0	67
4.	TEACHERs	7	57.2	62.8	63	45	60	60.8	58.2	60.2
5.	TELECOM	1	65	75	70	64	61	80	54	80
6.	INTERPRETER	1	74	86	72	81	76	84	67	81
7.	LAWYERS	2	74	50.5	80	41.5	75	56.5	72	56.5

The group of students with Prior Professional/work Experience (henceforth PPE) is made up of 18 students, while the Non Prior Professional Experience (henceforth NPPE) group is made up of 42 students. The total number of courses each participant is expected to take is eight. The mean of each course is calculated by adding the marks of all the participants in each course and dividing it by the number of participants.

Table 6. Mean of Means per Course per Sub-class

SUBCLASSES	SEMESTER 1		SEMESTER 2		SEMESTER 3		SEMESTER 4		TOTAL MEANS	Number courses	mean of means
	TRA 601	TRA 603	TRA 602	TRA 604	TRA 617	TRA 619	TRA 618	TRA 620			
S/NPPE	48.82	57.97	63.4	54.97	60.31	64.18	58.1	67.97	475.73	8	59.47
S/PPE	59.78	65.44	66.67	66.00	64.31	71.63	62.56	70.50	526.89	8	65.86
Differences between means (mean of S/PPE and S/NPPE)	10.96	7.47	3.27	11.03	4.00	7.45	4.46	2.53	51.16		6.40

From the above statistics, the scores registered in the courses of the PPE sub-class are higher than those of the NPPE sub-class. In TRA 601 (General Translation from French into English I), for instance, the mean of the NPPE sub-class is 48.82, while that of the PPE is 59.78, making a difference of 10.94. In terms of percentage,

it could be said that the PPE scored a percentage of 59.78%, while the NPPE scored 48.82%. The trend is the same for all the eight translation courses analyzed.

4.4 Perceptions and Dispositions towards Translation Learning

This section attempts to answer the fourth research question: What is the relationship between learners' perceptions and dispositions towards translation, and professional translator training outcomes in ASTI? More specifically, what are trainees' perceptions about translator training before enrolling in the institution? What are translation students' different perceptions of their class, teacher and curriculum? How do these perceptions and dispositions influence the learning process? What ideal attitudes are required of learners for improved performance in translation? What measures can the institution adopt in order to address trainees negative attitudes?

Table 7. Trainees' Perceptions and Dispositions towards Translation Learning

No.	Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Respondents' duration in ASTI	1 year	08	13.3
		2 years	34	56.7
		3 years	16	26.6
		Above 3 years	2	3.4
2.	Meeting students' expectations by ASTI	Very much	26	43.4
		Just what they expected	17	28.3
		Not very much	14	23.3
		Not at all	1	1.6
3.	Respondents' decision to come back to ASTI	Yes	38	63.3
		No	20	33.3
		No response	2	3.4
4.	Respondents' output	Excellent	04	6.6
		Very Good	34	56.6
		Average	20	33.3
		Below Average	1	1.6
		No response	1	1.6
5.	Personal opinion on ASTI program	CAT II to be made compulsory	4	6.6
		More time for practicum	2	3.3
		Free internet services	2	3.3
		Teaching of other languages	3	5
		Sight Translation made compulsory	3	5
		Audio visual translation compul	1	1.6
		Increase in number of years for train.	1	1.6
		Practicum reports made compul	1	1.6
		Better infrastructure and more halls	1	1.6
		Exams to be computerized	3	5
		More time for practicum	1	1.6
		Research methodology 1 st semester	7	11.6
		Separate semester for thesis writing	1	1.6
		Sports to be in ASTI curriculum	5	8.3
		Translation ethics/criticism course	1	1.6
		Regular seminars with professionals	5	8.3
		Creation of a training firm in ASTI	1	1.6
		No response	1	1.6
		More specialized law, economics, Language enhancement practical work	2	3.3
		Language enhancement practical work	1	1.6
Language enhancement & CAT II	14	23.3		
6.	Adequacy of learning environment	Sufficiency	3	5
		Insufficiency	43	71.6
		Adapted	1	1.6
		Ill adapted	12	20
		No response	1	1.6
7.	Number of hours of study per day	2 hours	20	33.3
		3 hours	18	30
		4 hours	12	20
		More	10	16.6
		No response	1	1.6



All learners are of the ages of 18-50 with the majority between the ages of 18-30. Young adults actually find it difficult studying in ASTI but those who fall between ages of 31-50 do. This is because the latter group is independent and self-sponsored. Most of the learners who have put in more than two years in ASTI actually fall within this age range. The majority of the trainees 42 (61.8%) want to become translators, 17 (25%) want to upgrade their translation skills (refresher course) and three are motivated by the lucrative nature of the profession. Also, 40 learners (66.6%) appreciated their output while 26 rated the output at average. This implies that ASTI students are not doing badly. The data also indicates that learners are not comfortable with the status of some courses. Conversely 43 respondents consider the learning environment insufficient and 16 said it was ill-adapted.

4.5 Expectations, Satisfaction and Loyalty

This section answers the fifth research question: What are the expectations, satisfaction and loyalty of trainee translators in ASTI? More specifically, what is the impact of trainee translators' individualities on their learning outcomes? How can the individuality of a trainee translator in terms of expectations, satisfaction and loyalty be managed for positive outcomes?

Table 8. Trainees' Expectations, Satisfaction and Loyalty

No	Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Training expectation	Become a professional translator	48	80
		Better understanding of the FRE/ENG grammar	10	16.6
		Proper use of CAT tools and real world texts	5	8.3
		Step up language skills	5	8.3
		None of the above	12	20
2.	Attainment of their training expectation			
3.	Achievement of their set objectives	Yes, it has been satisfied	14	23.3
		Not quite satisfied	34	56.6
		Not satisfied at all	12	20.0
Satisfaction as per the number of hours for studies	Yes, I am satisfied	37	61.7	
	Not quite satisfied	14	23.3	
	Not satisfied at all	9	15.0	
4.	Respondents opinion on their developed skills	Subject field knowledge	12	48
		Knowledge in translation theory	10	50
		Advanced research and π skills	51	9
		cultural knowledge	2	7
		Textual and ICT competence	15	19
Aspects students like to concentrate more on		Grammar of working languages	23	38.3
		Cultural elements	5	8.3
		Real world texts in translation	7	11.6
		Professional techniques/ethics	25	41.7
5.	Opinion on training facilities in ASTI	Satisfied	9	15.0
		Neutral	22	36.7
		Dissatisfied	29	48.3
Opinion on the teaching methodology		Student centered	2	3.3
		Teacher centered	6	10
		Interactive	52	86.6
6.	Opinion on the professional image of ASTI	Satisfied	9	15.0
		Neutral	22	36.7
		Dissatisfied	29	48.3
			29	48.3
7.	Opinion on recommending ASTI to future students	Yes	29	48.3
		Not quite	24	40.0
		Not at all	5	8.3
		No Response	2	3.3

From the above table, 48 students' expectation (80%) is to become a professional translator. However, 56.6% of them said they were not quite satisfied with their translation classes. 51 students (85%) profess that their most developed skills are advanced research and translation skills. Furthermore, 34 students (56.7%) are not satisfied with the teaching methodology in ASTI. Statistics also reveal that 37 students (61.7%) are satisfied with the number of hours put in for studies per week in ASTI.

Some 36 (60%) of the sampled students think that their overall satisfaction is fair. Conversely, 29 (48.3%) are satisfied with the professional image of ASTI. Only 20 (33.3%) of them would agree to return to ASTI. Hence only 16 (26.6%) of the respondents said they will recommend ASTI to people who wish to enrol for the master's programme in translation.

5. Discussion of Findings

This section discusses the findings by relating them with other researches done on related topics across the globe, and how these findings are in line with other studies, or are against the findings of other studies.

5.1 Addressing Gaps in Language Proficiencies

The problem of language development has frequently been disregarded in translator training tacitly assuming the existence of perfect bilingual trainee translators (Sakwe, 2013, 2014, and 2015). However, knowledge of language is complex, dynamic and incomplete, which implies that trainees can never be said to have learned all the language they need before being admitted to do translation studies. Reality often suggests that competency levels are not the same or what they should be.

From the statistics, language competence contributes significantly to translation achievement and poor performances in translation largely result from poor or inadequate mastery of the working languages. These results confirm the findings of Li (2001), Mansouri (2005), and Sakwe (2013). Trainees' felt needs for language boosting, variation in trainees' academic and linguistic backgrounds and the need to address gaps in competences in trainees' working languages are made more patent. The study demonstrates that language problems in translator training are real for trainees, particularly those without a language background. The study posits that an increased institutional support through language enhancement be given to cater for the trainee translators' profile gaps in Translator Training. As attested in the literature, the training of translators on the development of this sub-competence may lead to a higher degree of efficiency and accuracy skills in translation tasks (Li, 2001, Cao, 2006, Mansouri 2005).

As Pym (1992a) rightly points out: "the power structures [...] are such that, to insist on a perfect command of foreign languages before learning about translation ... would mean teaching translation to virtually empty

classes" (p. 281). Pym is referring to the situation in Spain, but his comment rings true for the United States also, where even graduate students often lack the level of proficiency needed for translation competence. Maier (1998) intimates that, "this lack indicates that an overlap between foreign language acquisition and translator training may be at least a necessary evil that instructors of both skills would do well to explore and in the best sense exploit" (p. 2).

Within the framework of this study, translational language competence instruction can be implemented in Translator Training as part of a broader MA research. Language skills and translation skills are not to be regarded as two independent variables but rather complementary and symbiotic (Sakwe, 2012, 2015).

5.2 Addressing Socio-economic and Environmental Diversities

The results outline a complex combination of related factors - financial, academic and socio-cultural - representing a multiplicity of challenges for economically disadvantaged students. This study argues for a package of needs to be taken into account when designing adequate support for translation students. The survey revealed that a majority of the trainees seldom bought and read newspapers and magazines (30.5%). These trainees lack an enabling home learning environment and learning facilities, and they trek to go to school from a long distance. This paints a negative picture as Ajila and Olutola (2007) opine that the state of the home affects the individual since the parents are the first socializing agents in an individual's life.

These results confirm findings in the literature. According to Kamla-Raj (2012) the school, home background and the interest of the student stand out as strong variables in explaining variation in learning



(p. 113). Disadvantaged students face a particular set of financial challenges in higher education as a result of their socio-economic circumstances. This illustrates the complex way in which financial and environmental circumstances. The stress students experience in relation to meeting the variety of financial needs can and does impact on their academic achievement and leads to social alienation. As Oyenuga (2007) points out, good home background and conducive environment tend to promote students' academic performances.

The literature also points to the role of higher education institutions, and the higher education sector as a whole, in promoting or inhibiting student success. This is not only due to the unpreparedness for higher education of disadvantaged students, but also on the unpreparedness of the institutions themselves. For instance, the financial assistance provided by the higher education institutions to needy students in Cameroon is usually done through Presidential grants schemes, which unfortunately tend to be aimed at high achievers only with no regards to the multiplier effects of students with inhibiting background factors.

5.3 Tapping Prior-Work Experience into Teaching

The findings from the case study on prior-work experience reveal that students with prior-work experience perform better than those without it. These results point to the importance of work experience or general knowledge in translation performance and which has implications on translator training. The results also confirm findings in the literature of experiential learning and androgogy or adult learning principles.

According to Bash (2003), the learner's experience assumes greater volume and different quality when he has had a variety

of work and life experiences and even previous educational ones. Adults are what they have done, and they have a deep investment in its value (Knowles, 1980). Findings established by Beder and Darkenwald, (1982) demonstrate that experienced students are more motivated, task-oriented, self-directed and more pragmatic than pre-adult students. The increasing need for experientially-oriented teaching is timidly gaining ground as reported in the literature of translation teaching/learning theories. These are theories which have to do with fostering learning that engages experience in general and professional experience in particular. They include: the profession-centered and student-centered approaches of Christian Nord (1988, 1996, and 2011), the trainee-empowerment approach of Ritta J, (1996, 1998), the situational approach of Daniel Gouadec (2000, 2003), and the task-based approach of Hurtado (1996).

In Translator Training, approaches which engage students to broaden their scope, their cognitive complement, and develop their general and technical knowledge would produce more positive outcomes. Translator training institutions should review their educational systems like universities in the USA and Sweden, which take into consideration the role of prior work experience. Furthermore, teachers should recognize the value of experiences and knowledge that participants bring to the training, and to encourage participants to relate them to the topic. Applying these principles in the translation would positively impact on translator trainee's method of facilitation, the delivery of the instruction, and the classroom environment.

5.4 Addressing Trainees' Negative Attitudes

Findings on trainees' perceptions and dispositions clearly prove that learners require particular attitudes to successfully sail through in ASTI. This is confirmed by Lörcher (1989) who rightly postulated that what students assume to be good solutions may in fact turn out to be poor translations (p. 159). Hence, conflicting perceptions and ill-adapted dispositions largely account for increasing learners' poor learning outcomes. This view is shared by Schmidt (1999) who rightly intimated that most students embark on translation without any intention of becoming translators as revealed in this case study. Trainee translators in ASTI need to come out from their comfort zone in order to learn new methods which are productive. As Frawley (1984) rightly pontificates, translators should be adventurous but not be adventurers (p. 21).

Trainee translators must desire to possess a full mastery of the tools of their trade and read extensively, especially in specialized subject fields. As Shrev (1997) points out, learners must be ready to acquire new computer skills and learn new technologies (p. 228). This justifies the need for CAT II to become a compulsory course. If trainee translators can avoid ghost learning and concentrate, then graduating from ASTI within two years would not pose a problem. Some 11 out of 29 learners that is, (37.9%) who had other commitments outside their school work in ASTI had put in at least three years and are still not done with their course work and or theses. Adequate measures should address learners' perceptions and dispositions.

5.5 Managing Trainees Expectations, Satisfaction and Loyalty

Findings in the survey require an urgent need to tailor services to trainees' expectations. These views are confirmed in the literature. Heskett et al. (1997) opine

that there is a link between students' satisfaction, loyalty and academic outcomes. That is, increased students' satisfaction leads to increase in students' loyalty, and these have a positive outcome on their performances. In this vein, students should be treated as different individuals and it should be accepted that students have different valid expectations of their university experience, and if these expectations are met (that is if they obtain satisfaction), it can greatly influence their loyalty, hence the professional image of the school.

Another study by Berry (1995) confirms that service is one of the important factors that enhances value, and can positively influence a programme's success. In effect, students' perception about satisfaction can act as an essential tool to enhance the institution's service quality. Hence, every educational institution needs to understand its internal strength and weakness, as well as its external opportunities and threats. In Translator Training institutions, where students come from different backgrounds, expectations and perceptions of satisfaction may vary. Educational authorities should develop their training institutions in the light of various dimensions of students' quality perception. They should comply with all the necessities, standards and requirements of quality education needed by their students, particularly the reliability of facilities being offered, and most importantly the empathy of administrative staff, which is a significant factor in quality perception.

6. Recommendations for Responsive Translator Training

Moll (1986) opined that the issue of how to address diversity in schools tends to be the major educational issue of the 21st century. Students in most Translator



training institutions like ASTI have multiple, diverse, and changing needs that are shaped by individual learning histories and abilities, as well as cultural, language backgrounds, and socio-economic factors. All of these dimensions shape who these students are and how they learn. Some of them have unique challenges that make learning in a traditional classroom difficult. Effective Translator Trainers should understand this and use a variety of teaching methods to promote student learning. This is why among the seven specific categories of teacher knowledge proposed by Shulman (1987), he included an essential category - knowledge of learners. Knowledge of Diverse Learners (KDL) is increasingly being recognized as an essential component of the knowledge-base for effective teaching in today's schools. Translator trainers must be prepared to identify diverse students' strengths, weaknesses, aspirations, limitations, and special needs. In effect, today's classrooms must celebrate diversity.

The major challenge in a Translator training school like ASTI's is how to design an action plan that would address learners' diversities in order to ensure that programmes and learning opportunities offered have sufficient academic rigour to maximize students' growth, while having sufficient flexibility to meet the diverse needs of all students. In other words, the specific needs of each student should successfully be addressed. A commendable effort is presently being done to improve on the infrastructure. However, a lot more needs to be done on teacher-students relationship. Researchers have found that students who feel they have supportive and caring teachers are more motivated to engage in academic work than students with unsupportive, uncaring teachers (McCombs, 2001; Newman, 2002). The

real challenge in the translation classroom in ASTI is that most teachers are not patient, and they show no compassion, respect, or understanding for weaker or disadvantaged students. With a good grasp of students' characteristics, teachers can turn learner diversity into an asset by capitalizing on students' different talents, interests and backgrounds in the classroom setting. Quality instruction is a factor of teachers' ability to respond appropriately and flexibly to students' different needs.

6.1 Towards a Productive Translation Learning Environment for Diverse Students

Translator trainers should adopt approaches to the translation text which should keep the students involved in the class throughout the semester. This involves matching their teaching techniques to both their translation course objectives and to students' multiple learning styles. The Translator trainer should set course expectations and standards, and also cause students to know that the trainer has high expectations for them, and that as teachers, they are committed to helping the students to reach the set goals. In practical translation classes, teachers should encourage the students to adequately analyze the source text through some *a priori* designed questions requiring higher-order critical thinking skills. Furthermore, teachers should customize their courses to students' needs in order to teach more efficiently and effectively. At the beginning of the course teachers should announce that they want to work with every student's strengths and weaknesses, and that they are enthusiastic to discuss any student's improvement. Translator trainers should adopt behaviour that creates a safe and comfortable climate.

Texts selected for translation should be topical and students-friendly. In other words, efforts should be made to relate

lessons to students' everyday experiences like drawing materials from a pre-requisite course. Teachers should identify with students' difficulties as much as possible by recalling the reactions they had the first time they encountered similar translation problems or a particular text genre. Furthermore, teachers should always back practical translation proposals with studied explanations drawn from the rich theoretical knowledge-base in Translation Studies. They should help students to realize that everyone learns from mistakes, and that working through the mistakes as a group often leads to a much deeper level of understanding and cognitive growth for everyone. In effect, all independent thinking by students, even if it leads to a wrong answer should be rewarded. Wrong answers should simply be improved upon in line with Pym's non-binarity principle for variety in adequacy, acceptability and appropriacy. Tutoring services should be provided to students before their difficulties become overwhelming. Lastly, teachers should learn to probe students' conceptual frameworks (often by simply listening) without being authoritative or embarrassing the students.

There is some evidence that translator trainers who take a student focused approach to teaching will encourage students towards a deep approach to study (Prosser and Trigwell, 1999). In this perspective, there has been a timid but growing interest in identifying teaching strategies that effectively address the diversities of "different", "disadvantaged", and "at-risk" learners in the literature of Translation Studies. These include proposals on: the importance of establishing training objectives (Delisle, 1980, 1992, 1993, 2005), the profession-centred and student-centred approaches (Nord, 1988, 1996, 2011), the task-based approaches

(Hurtado Albir, 1996, 1999 and González Davies, 2003, 2004), towards a balance between conscious analysis and subliminal discovery (Robinson, 1997), and the socio-constructivist approach (Kiraly, 1995, 2000, 2003).

6.2 Towards a Safe and Inclusive Classroom Environment

Translator trainers should consider the multiple factors of syllabus, course content, class preparation, their own classroom behavior, and their knowledge of students' backgrounds and skills. Heather Fry (2009) pointed out that as the roles of translator trainers are complex and multifaceted and also that trainee translators bring different backgrounds and expectations to learning, the attitudes and actions of both parties are bound to affect the learning outcomes. The responsive pedagogy posited in this study addresses three dimensions: (a) institutional, (b) personal, and (c) instructional. A critical examination of the educational system's relationship to its diverse constituents must be made. Not only must changes occur institutionally, but personally and instructionally as well.

The translator trainers' self-reflection is an important part of the personal dimension. By honestly examining their attitudes and beliefs about themselves and others, translator trainers in ASTI like their colleagues worldwide, might discover why they are who they are, and can confront biases that have influenced their value system (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Often most translator trainers in ASTI are resistant to the notion that their values might reflect prejudices or even biases towards certain trainee translators. When trainers are able to rid themselves of such biases, they can help to create an atmosphere of trust and acceptance for students, thereby creating greater opportunity for trainees' success.



To effectively teach in a diverse classroom, teachers must have an appreciation of diversity. They must view difference as the “norm” in society and reject notions such as in the case of ASTI, that Francophones are more competent in translation than Anglophones. They should develop respect for differences, and the willingness to teach from this perspective. Moreover, it should be acknowledged that the Translator trainer’s views of the world are not the only views.

Translator trainers in ASTI need to participate in reforming ASTI so that it becomes inclusive. Trainers are the direct link between the institution and the students, so they are in a pivotal position to facilitate change. The traditional “conform-or-fail” approach to instruction is a quaint method of the 20th Century which perpetuates a monocultural institution. When the tools of instruction (i.e., books, teaching methods, and activities) are incompatible with the disadvantaged students’ experiences, a disconnect with school may occur (Irvine, 1992). For some students this rejection of school may take the form of simply underachieving. For others, rejection could range from not performing at all to dropping out of school completely. Responsive pedagogy recognizes and utilizes the students’ strengths and weaknesses, and ultimately respects the students’ personal and community identities. It is important that both Translator trainers and Management have a better understanding of the relationship between the design of the training, the transfer environment, and characteristics of the trainees, because these ultimately affect trainees’ expectations and the effectiveness of the training program.

7. Conclusion

The objective of this study was to investigate how trainees’ characteristics

affect training outcomes, to find out what trainees expect from the trainers and to determine the challenges that trainers should anticipate during the training period. From the research findings it was revealed that there is a high correlation between trainees’ characteristics, their expectations, and their training outcomes. One environmental factor to be prioritized is the transfer of training climate, defined as the trainee’s perception of the degree to which there will be support for using on the job what has been acquired in training. This means that effective training should be relevant, engaged, active, and learner-centered.

Teachers have a responsibility to all their students to ensure that all of them have an equal opportunity to achieve to the best of their ability. Instruction that is responsive addresses the needs of all learners. Translator training institutions should devote more attention to ascertaining just what the expectations of trainee translators are, and put more interest in meeting them, hence encouraging better outcomes.

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