



STUDY OF THE INTERPRETATION MARKET IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

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Abstract

This study examines the interpretation market in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) with the objectives of evaluating its organization, identifying key stakeholders, and addressing the challenges faced by the profession. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected through 40 questionnaires distributed to interpreters and clients, offering both quantitative and qualitative insights. Guided by the supply and demand theory as well as the control theory, the analysis highlights a market that is largely unstructured and lacks clear regulations. The field is dominated by male interpreters and remains open to anyone, contributing to issues such as inconsistent billing practices. Key challenges identified include inadequate interpreter training, the need for better market structuring, and the promotion of national languages. Addressing these issues is essential to enhance the quality and professionalism of the interpretation market in the DRC.

Keywords:

Interpretation, Interpretation Market, Market Study.

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1. Introduction

Interpreting, a practice with ancient roots that has evolved into a pivotal source of livelihood for interpreters worldwide, is deeply ingrained in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) due to its expansive landscape and diverse array of languages. Originating long before colonial times, interpreting in the DRC was formalized during the colonial era and has persisted through to the present day. The significance of interpreting in the DRC is underscored by its presence in both public and private sectors, as enshrined in Article 142 of the country's constitution. With four official languages and a rich linguistic tapestry, interpreting plays a vital role in ensuring the smooth functioning of institutions and serves as a means of income for many Congolese. (Dina et al, 2023)

The establishment of the United Nations in the aftermath of World War II also brought a new wind to the field of interpretation in the country, with a strong presence of UN agencies in the Democratic Republic of Congo needing to find interpreters who translate from one of the Congolese languages into foreign languages (mostly French or English). The development of global exchanges has not spared interpretation activities in the DRC, particularly with a notable presence of China in the country's mining sector, Indians and Lebanese in commerce, Kenyans and Nigerians in banking, etc. All these facts are made possible through interpretation since those coming into the country have no choice but to resort to translation and interpretation to effectively carry out their tasks.

Despite this long-standing presence of interpretation in the DRC, it must be noted that no study has ever been dedicated to understanding its organization; that is to say, demonstrating whether interpretation is well organized or not and identifying challenges related to the interpretation market in the DRC. Thus, this study raises questions about how organized the interpretation market is in DRC and what challenges this market presents. This article therefore aims to answer these two questions: how is the interpretation market organized in DRC and what challenges does this market face? Thus, the present study aims to describe the landscape of interpretation in DRC, identify associated challenges, and propose concrete solutions to address these challenges to contribute to this market's growth.

2. Literature Review

In this section, we will focus on the conceptual review to define the key concepts of our study, the empirical review to analyze previous works relevant to this study, and the theoretical review to examine the theories that underpin our research.

2.1. Conceptual Review

2.1.1. Interpretation

In general, the term interpretation comes from the Latin "interpretatio," which is derived from another Latin term "interpretatum," stemming from "interpretari," meaning to interpret. The origins of this term date back to 1160 according to the Grand Robert de la langue française (2010). Throughout history, humans have communicated in diverse languages, necessitating the presence of interpreters to facilitate understanding between speakers. The concept of an "intermediary" is deeply rooted in antiquity, with some scholars linking its origins to the Assyrian civilization. This highlights the long-standing significance of

interpretation and underscores the vital role that interpreters play in bridging linguistic divides (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1958).

Seleskovitch (1968), emphasizes that interpretation is essentially “the acquisition and restitution of cognitive content” (AICC, 1979). Furthermore, he precisely states that in order to achieve a useful knowledge of the working languages, one must have acquired them in early childhood, and then in foreign schools or universities. This underscores that, in fulfilling their role as a mediator, the interpreter performs a series of complex tasks. They must first receive a set of information, extract its meaning, find an equivalent in the target language, and then transmit that meaning. Their listening must be, in a way, flexible and focused on the meaning rather than on word-for-word or literal translation (Boivin and al., 2011). Hence, the interpreter must necessarily interpret to make the discourse intelligible, rather than merely translate. As Falbo (2021), specifies that interpretation addresses the needs for mutual understanding that arise within a community at the national or international level. It is situated within the various contexts and situations that characterize the lives of individuals and, therefore, society.

2.1.2. The Interpretation Market

The interpretation market is a specialized sector that encompasses various types of interpretation, such as conference interpretation, community interpretation, legal interpretation, medical interpretation etc. This market is shaped by the demand for linguistic services in international and multicultural contexts. According to Gile (2009), the interpretation market is defined as the entirety of professional interpretation services offered in various settings, including international conferences, legal systems, healthcare institutions, and community services. Gile highlights the diversity of environments in which interpreters work and the specific skills required for each domain. Pöchhacker (2004) identifies several segments of the interpretation market, each with its own characteristics. For instance conference interpretation, often used in diplomatic and international business contexts, requires skills in simultaneous interpretation however community interpretation, employed in social and medical settings, necessitates an understanding of cultural dynamics and training in consecutive interpretation.

Overall, the interpretation market is experiencing significant growth. Markets are becoming increasingly internationalized, new technologies are booming, borders are fading, and mass tourism is becoming widespread. However, the only persistent barrier remains language. The demand for interpretation services has never been higher, prompting interpretation companies to develop new specializations to meet client expectations. At international institutions, in the media, NGOs, and major corporations alike, interpretation assignments are multiplying across all levels and fields. The ability to accurately convey a message, with all its nuances and implications—whether simultaneously at large conferences or as a liaison between two economic actors—has become essential in a world where information, communication, and financial transactions occur almost instantaneously. Whether working within an interpretation company, an institution, or as a freelance professional, interpreters are increasingly required to adapt or specialize in various thriving sectors. These sectors include engineering, human resources, biology, finance, media, information technology, culture, and more. An interpreter’s mastery of languages and specialized vocabulary makes them a valuable and indispensable intermediary.

2.1.3. Aspects of a market study

The primary objective of market research is to reduce the risks of failure by enabling to take appropriate measures to establish a lasting presence in the market and, in the long term, to better understand the forces at play. Generally, market research revolves around five essential phases: defining the problem to be solved, developing a study plan, gathering information in the field, analyzing the data, and presenting the results (Giannelloni, 2000). Furthermore, two main approaches exist for conducting a market study: quantitative and qualitative approaches.

The quantitative approach is predominantly based on statistics, key figures concerning a market, industry sector, or field of activity. The resulting information will be comprehensive. This study essentially aims to quantify and measure information. On the other hand, qualitative market research is more limited but in-depth. This study reduces the surveyed sample while increasing the amount of collected information. It is clear that one must first understand the aspects in which they intend to invest.

In the context of the translation and interpreting market, as they are related professions, we can refer to the works of DePalma, Pielmeier, Henderson, Stewart (2015) who have focused on the market. In their market study, these authors identified characteristic aspects of this market such as supply and demand, technological tools in the sector, ranking of language service providers, etc., ultimately examining the relationship between the language services industry and supporting technology. Thus, to conduct this foundational work, it is evident that a basic understanding of the market is necessary. This will allow for the identification of its various aspects.

2.2. Empirical Review

2.2.1. Some's 2024 Study

The study titled "*Analysis of the Needs of the Interpretation Market in Burkina Faso*" conducted by Some Gaetan in 2024 explores the dynamism and evolution of the interpretation market in the context of a country with around 60 languages, further influenced by the establishment of NGOs and other institutions. The author examines the market's organization, its needs, and its prospects, relying on a mixed-methods data collection approach, including 52 questionnaires (47 interpreters and 5 clients) and 3 interviews.

The study reveals a low representation of women (19%) among interpreters. The majority of professionals hold a master's degree (68%), and their language combinations primarily include French, English, four national languages (Mooré, Dioula, Dagara, Fulfulde), and Spanish. Employment is predominantly part-time (68%), with 89% of interpreters also engaged in other activities. The clients of interpreters mainly consist of NGOs (60.5%), state services, international organizations, interpretation agencies, and private clients. However, only 55% of interpreters have professional training, and just 15% belong to a professional association. This research highlights the need for greater structuring and professionalization of the interpretation market in Burkina Faso.

2.2.2. Afolabi (2018) Study

Afolabi (2018) conducted a doctoral study titled: "*Market Needs Analysis and Interpretation: Towards Optimizing the Training of Professional Translators and Interpreters in Nigeria.*"

The objective of this study was to explore the development of new postgraduate programs in translation and interpretation in Nigeria. Afolabi (2018) aligns with several authors (see Durieux, 2005; Kelly, 2005; Kiraly, 2005; and Fiola, 2003a, for example) in asserting that understanding and addressing market needs are essential for designing training programs for professional translators and interpreters.

The study highlights the issue of a lack of empirical studies based on market needs analysis for translation and interpretation. Furthermore, in the field of translation and interpretation, more emphasis is placed on practice than theory. Topics related to these fields are scarce, partly because there are very few specialized educators qualified to supervise research in these areas (Afolabi, 2014).

2.2.3. Jolibois (2013) Study

Simon Jolibois' research thesis, "The Regulation of Conference Interpretation" (2013), examines the organization of the conference interpretation market by identifying three levels of regulation: individual, internal, and external. At the individual level, personal ethics and the defense of professional ethics are central to regulation, with the author referencing Article 4.b of the AIIC Code of Ethics as a cornerstone of this approach. The internal level is based on rules established by professional organizations, such as the AIIC (founded in 1953), which created an international code of ethics to professionalize the practice. Lastly, the external level revolves around interactions between interpreters and clients—individuals or international organizations such as the UN and the EU—contributing to the regulation and recognition of the profession. Jolibois concludes that these three levels ensure the viability and professionalization of conference interpretation. However, he highlights some shortcomings, including a lack of clarity in disciplinary procedures, the non-universal membership of professional organizations, and the existence of a grey market.

While the study is relevant, it has methodological limitations. The author relies primarily on interviews with institutional representatives, overlooking the perspectives of a broader sample of professional interpreters. Additionally, a clearer articulation of the theoretical framework could have strengthened the validity of his conclusions.

2.3. Theoretical Review

The theories of supply and demand as well as control, according to Holly Mikkelsen, are the two theories that underpin our study.

2.3.1. Supply and Demand Theory

The theory of supply and demand explains the interaction between sellers of a resource and buyers of that resource. Supply and demand determine free trade like almost no other factor. The theory defines how the relationship between the availability of a particular product and the desire (or demand) for that product influences its price.

We better understand this when Whelan & Msefer (1996) define supply and demand theory as an economic model that explains the equilibrium of a single product in the market. Furthermore, they point out that to study the behavior of a market, it is essential to consider three major elements: supply, demand, and price. The terms "supply and demand" were first

used by the Scottish economist, James Denham-Steuart in 1767 in the study on the principles of Political Economy (cited by Ramos and Mirowski, 2011). This study allowed us to establish the interaction between supply and demand and especially to see how the quality of supply influences prices in the interpretation market in the DRC.

2.3.2 Control Theory according to Holly Mikkelsen (1992)

The control theory not only considers the internal characteristics of the specific profession or activity, but also examines the connections between the activity and the labor market, as well as institutions within society. According to Tseng, the most powerful professions are characterized by strong associations (Tseng, 1992). He proposes a process divided into several steps: organizational chaos, strengthening of training institutions, coordinated efforts among stakeholders, and the creation of a professional association for drafting a code of ethics. The strength of this control theory lies in its pragmatic approach.

3. Methodology of Work

This research utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods, especially since the data collected is mixed. This section discusses the size of the population, sampling techniques, data collection instruments and data processing and analysis.

3.1. Population Size

The population of our research consists of interpreters (both independent and institutional), companies and/or non-governmental organizations that request interpretation services (which we refer to in this work as clients), interpreters from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and interpreters who are members of ATIPCO.

3.2. Sampling Techniques

For the purpose of this study, we constituted a sample of 40 respondents. These 40 participants are distributed as follows: 30 interpreters (both independent and institutional) and 10 clients. We first resorted to snowball sampling because there is no database or official directories that provide information on the number of interpreters (independent and institutional) in the country. It is not possible to know exactly how many interpreters there are. The snowball technique allowed us to create a significant sample for our research. Secondly, we used purposive sampling. This technique enabled us to form our sample from companies or organizations that utilize interpretation in their activities.

3.3. Data Collection Instruments

To achieve this, we developed two survey questionnaires. One was addressed to interpreters, and the other to job providers (the clients and organizations that utilize interpretation services in their operations). The choice of these two actors was guided by their prominence in the market. These two groups hold the most relevant information regarding the functioning of the market and, as such, are included in this survey. A sample of 30 interpreters and 10 clients was constituted to undertake this study.

3.4. Data Processing and Analysis

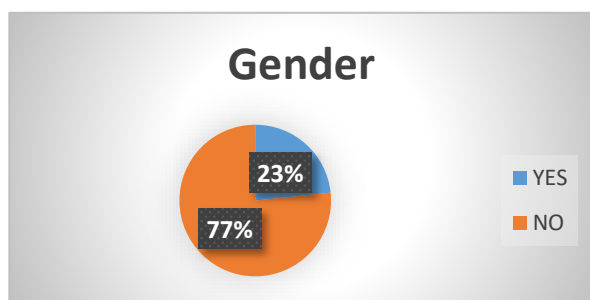
The collected data will be analyzed according to a well-defined procedure. Quantitative data is collected through questionnaires generated online using Google Forms. The data was

coded according to the investigated themes. The questionnaire themes were aligned with the research objectives, so the data encoding also followed the research objectives. Once fully coded, the data was exported to the SPSS software to ensure additional checks for consistency, data range, and validation in order to identify invalid codes, which was done using exploratory statistics. After the data was checked for possible errors, quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The results obtained are presented using frequency distribution graphs.

4. Presentation and Results Analysis

The analysis of data regarding the organization of the interpretation market in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was conducted based on the following main points: gender, age group, level of education after obtaining a state diploma, interpretation training, professional experience, interpreter status, language combinations, types of interpretation, types of areas, additional services offered beyond interpretation, billing (the standard price for a translation), and annual meetings. The presentation of all this information will help to identify the challenges faced by the interpretation market in the DRC. Finally, solutions will be proposed to address these challenges and enable this market to experience its growth.

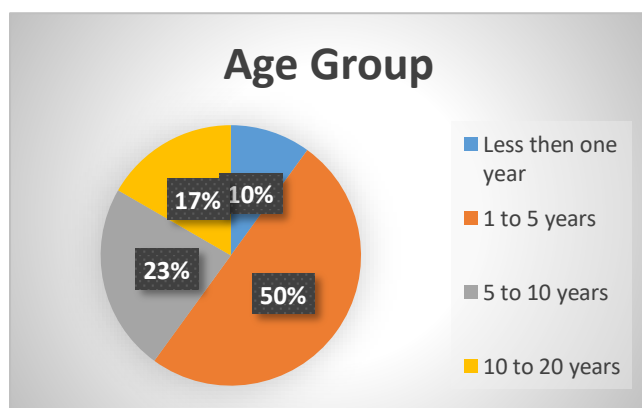
4.1. Gender



Graph 1: Distribution of respondents by gender

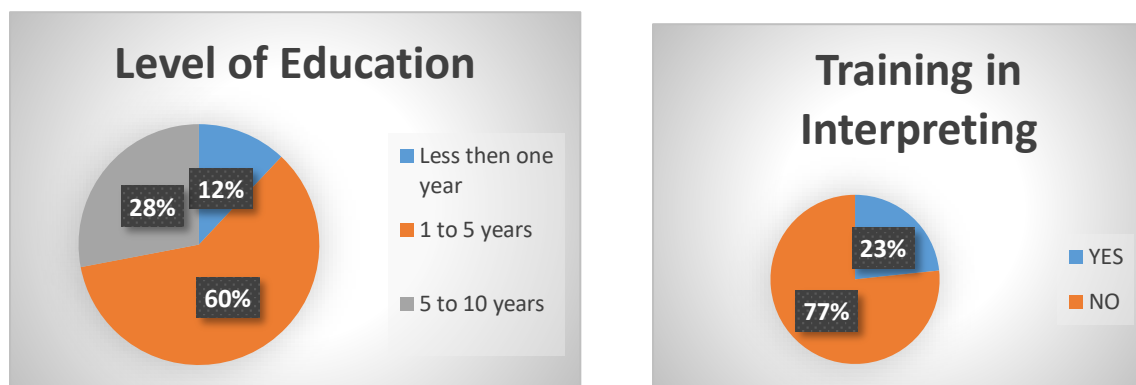
According to the graph above, the results of the analyses show that regarding the gender variable, there are more male interpreters than female interpreters. Among the 30 respondents, 20 (or 67% of the sample) are male and 10 (or 33% of the sample) are female. Unlike in Europe, where there is a strong presence of female interpreters, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is male interpreters who are more numerous.

4.2. Age Group



Graph 2: Distribution of respondents by age group

4.3. Level of Education after the State Diploma and Training in Interpretation



Graphs 3 & 4: Distribution of the education level of interpreters and their training in interpreting

The graph (on the left) above indicates that 67% of interpreters have a bachelor's degree (BAC+5), and they hold this diploma in various fields ranging from humanities to exact sciences, including technical studies. 16% have an undergraduate degree (BAC+3), and 17% have a master's degree (BAC+7). The graph on the right shows that only 23% have a training in interpretation, while 77% have no training in interpreting. This means that the interpretation market is dominated by 77% natural interpreters (who still hold at least one university degree).

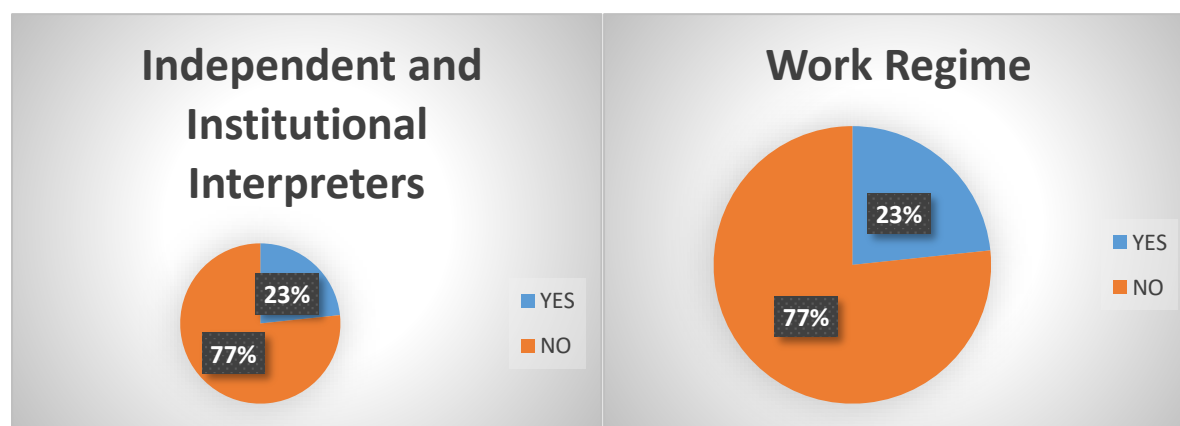
4.4. Professional Experience



Graph 5: Distribution of years of experience in interpreting

Regarding the experiences of interpreters, the analyses show that 10% of interpreters have less than 1 year of experience whereas 50% of interpreters have professional experience ranging from 1 to 5 years. These figures indeed corroborate our statements about the youthfulness of interpreters working in the interpreting market. More and more people understand that interpretation can indeed constitute a profession and can provide a livelihood. Additionally, 23% of respondents have experience ranging from 5 to 10 years in the interpretation market in the Democratic Republic of Congo and 17% of interpreters ranging from 10 to 20 years of experience.

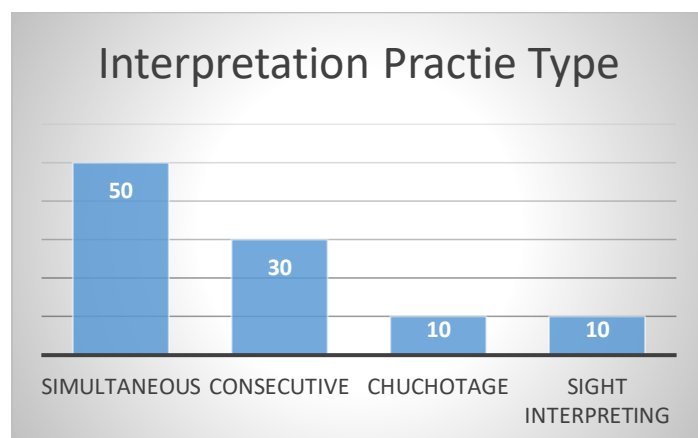
4.5. Independent and Institutional Interpreters



Graphs 6 & 7: Distribution of translator status and their work regime

According to the graph on the left, the interpretation market in the Democratic Republic of Congo is dominated by independent interpreters, who represent 77% of the sample, while institutional interpreters account for 23%. This situation arises from the fact that many public and private institutions do not want to permanently hire interpreters because they consider it unnecessarily costly and prefer to call upon interpreters as needed. The 23% who are institutional interpreters are mostly found in international organizations, foreign banks established in the country, etc. According to the graph on the right, it should be noted that 77% of interpreters work part-time, meaning they engage in another profession outside of interpreting, making interpretation a secondary activity. For 23%, interpreting is a primary activity practiced full-time.

4.6. Interpreting Typology

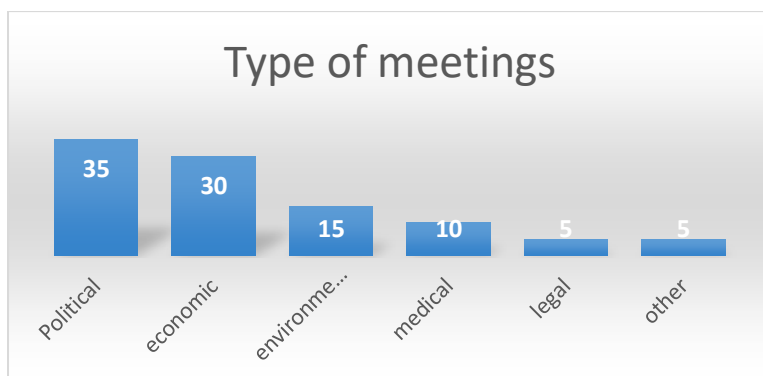


Graph 8: Distribution of often used interpreting types

This graph illustrates the distribution of various types of interpretation utilized in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Among these, simultaneous interpreting is the most prevalent, comprising 50% of the total usage. This method allows interpreters to convey messages in real-time, which is particularly beneficial during international conferences where timely communication is crucial. Following this, consecutive interpreting accounts for 30% of the usage. In this mode, interpreters wait for the speaker to pause before conveying the message, making it suitable for smaller meetings or discussions where immediate feedback is

not as critical. Chuchotage and sight interpreting each represent a mere 10% of the overall interpretation methods employed. Chuchotage involves whispering interpretations to a small audience, while sight interpreting refers to translating written texts on-the-spot. The limited use of these methods can be attributed to their specific contexts and requirements, which may not be as frequently encountered in large-scale international events.

4.7. Meeting Typology

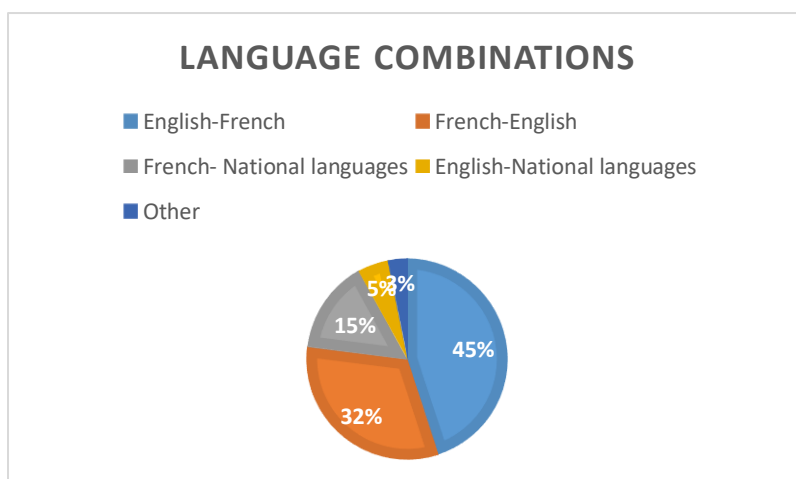


Graph 9: Distribution of types of interpreting meetings

This graph illustrates the distribution of various types of interpreting meetings held in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The data reveals that political meetings constitute 35% of the total, making them the most prevalent type. Economic meetings follow closely, accounting for 30% of the total meetings. Environmental meetings represent 15%, while legal and other types each make up 5%.

The predominance of political and economic meetings can be attributed to the nature of work undertaken by interpreters in this context. Many interpreters are employed by international organizations and corporations, such as banks and insurance firms, which tend to focus on these areas. International organizations often prioritize political issues relevant to the DRC, reflecting their interest in governance, stability, and development within the country. On the other hand, companies typically engage with economic matters that directly impact their operations and investments.

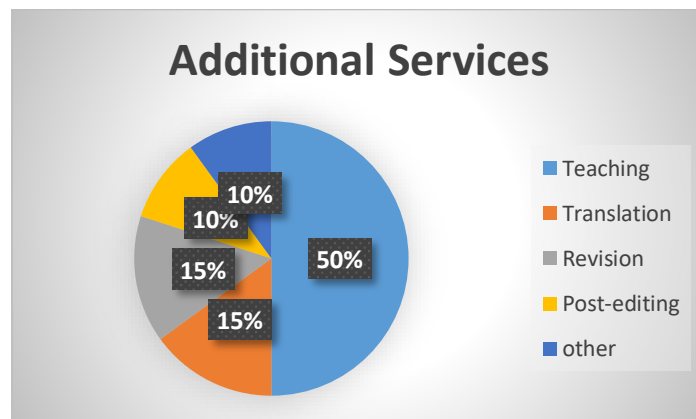
4.8. Linguistic Combinations



Graph 10: Distribution of the most requested linguistic combinations

The most sought-after combination in the market is English-French, which accounts for 45% of the sample. In second place is the French-English combination, representing 32% of the sample. The presence of these two linguistic combinations indicates that interpretation is primarily driven by international organizations. These organizations feel the need to interpret into French to work within the country with individuals who do not understand English, on the one hand, and on the other hand, they interpret into English to report back to their companies that are not located in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo). The interpretation to and from local languages still lags behind.

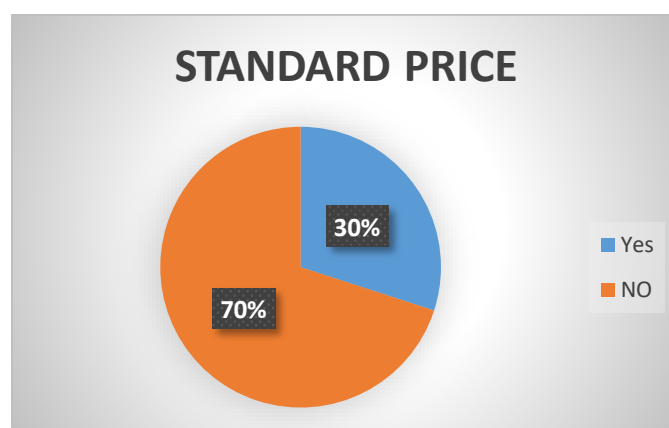
4.9. Services Offered in Addition to Interpreting



Graph 11: Distribution of services offered in addition to interpretation

In addition to interpreting, interpreters offer several other services including: teaching (50%), translation (15%), revision (15%), post-editing (10%), and other services (10%). This predominance of foreign language teachers in the market indicates that many interpreters are simply bilinguals, suggesting that being bilingual is often seen as sufficient qualification to be considered an interpreter in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

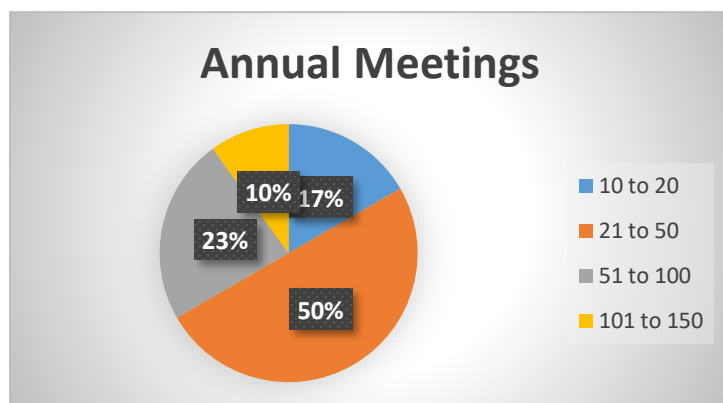
4.10. Standard Price



Graph 12: Existence of a standard price or a minimum threshold

This graph indicates that 70% of interpreters acknowledge that there is no standard price for interpretation that everyone can adhere to. The market is not regulated in this regard. Each individual is free to set and accept any price for an interpretation. Conversely, 30% of interpreters believe that there exists a minimum threshold below which they cannot interpret.

4.11. Annual Meetings



Graph 13: Distribution of annual meetings

This graph shows the interpreters' annual meetings which are distributed as follows: 21 to 50 meetings account for 50% of interpreters, followed by 51 to 100 meetings represent 23%. 10 to 20 meetings comprise 17%, finally 101 to 150 meetings make up 10%. These data indicate that most interpreters participate in a moderate number of annual meetings, with half attending between 21 and 50 meetings.

The analyses above depict the organization of the interpretation market in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It has been observed that this market is not organized. It remains very porous and presents no barriers to entry. This disorder can be explained by the influx of natural or untrained interpreters who are primarily bilingual. They cannot optimally organize the market given their glaring deficit in interpreting training. The analyses also reveal that the interpretation market remains very young, as evidenced by the average age of interpreters working in it. This situation brings a glimmer of hope since youth, once trained and informed, can easily bring order to the market. The description of the interpretation market in the Democratic Republic of Congo, as presented above, allows for the identification of challenges and the proposal of solutions for the interpretation market. This will be discussed in the next point.

5. Challenges of the Interpretation Market in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Our study on two main players in the interpretation market, namely interpreters and clients, highlights several challenges that prevent the profession from flourishing and experiencing its best days. All actors agree on the following key points:

5.1. Market Structuring

This disorder is due to the weak barriers to entry in the market. It is almost a free-for-all where anything can happen without any reprimand; there is no regulation, and the porosity that characterizes the market contributes to its decline. There is a lack of a powerful body capable of imposing rules and regulating the market itself. All problems begin from this point.

5.2. The Absence of the Association of Translators and Interpreters of Congo (ATIPCO) in Practice

Although this association exists in name, it is evident that it fails to effectively defend the rights of interpreters. Its presence in the market is negligible; many interpreters are scarcely aware of its existence. Founded in 2006, the association has struggled to establish itself within the Congolese interpretation community. Over time, it has seemingly transformed into a social circle that gathers annually to celebrate Translator's Day on September 30, after which its activities fade into obscurity.

5.3. Interpretation Billing

Stakeholders consistently lament the absence of standardized minimum pricing, which would enable interpreters to practice their profession under fairer conditions. Addressing this issue falls within ATIPCO's mandate, but the association has proven ineffective in tackling it. The market remains unregulated, allowing anyone to enter and set their own rates, ultimately undermining the profession's value. Clients often prioritize the lowest price, unable to differentiate between skilled professionals and unqualified individuals, as no reliable mechanism exists to verify credentials. As a result, the market is increasingly flooded with amateurs offering rates below an acceptable standard, compromising the quality of interpretations.

5.4. Interpreters' Training

The lack of quality training in interpretation that aligns with current market needs significantly undermines the profession. Stakeholders frequently highlight issues such as poor terminology skills, inability to perform consecutive and simultaneous interpreting, inadequate proficiency in national languages, and unfamiliarity with specialized dictionaries. Despite the existence of two translation schools in the country, their programs fail to deliver the quality content required to prepare competent professionals.

This gap in training has opened the door to individuals who mistakenly believe that fluency in two languages qualifies them as interpreters, thereby disrupting the market. Ségard (2009:6), vividly describes this reality: *"The professional translator is unfortunately not safe from fools who believe one can become a translator overnight. The day dawns; I wake up. What shall I do today? How about translating to supplement my income? This joke can be very damaging."*

Professional interpreters face fierce competition from what can only be described as "word tinkers"—unscrupulous individuals who offer substandard services at cut-rate prices, undermining the value of the profession. Translating at such rates, as some argue, is akin to prostituting one's craft. Those who blur the line between interpretation and exploitation should reconsider their role and leave the work to skilled professionals.

This stark reality perfectly illustrates the challenges facing the interpretation market in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Addressing these issues is crucial to protecting the profession from predators and ensuring its future sustainability.

6. Recommendations

At the end of these analyses, it is important to suggest some solutions that can be applied to organize the interpretation market in DRC. These recommendations are formulated based on responses from participants in this study:

6.1. Establishment of Training Institutions Capable of Meeting Market Needs

Respondents emphasize the urgent need to establish professional training institutions for interpretation. The absence of quality training lies at the core of many challenges facing the profession. To address this, it is essential to rethink the curricula of existing translation and interpretation schools and create new institutions dedicated to professional training.

Revising these programs is particularly important because the current schools were founded by linguists—specialists in French and English literature or linguistics—whose expertise does not necessarily align with the practical demands of interpretation. As a result, the curricula are heavily skewed toward linguistic theory, with minimal input from experienced translators or interpreters. This disconnect leaves graduates ill-prepared to meet the needs of the interpretation market, underscoring the need for a comprehensive overhaul of training approaches.

6.2. Revitalization of ATIPCO

ATIPCO must assume its role as a market regulator to bring order and address market vulnerabilities. It cannot remain merely a social club of acquaintances. As highlighted earlier, structuring the sector is the only viable path forward. Currently, nothing prevents unqualified individuals from proclaiming themselves interpreters and even establishing legitimate-looking interpretation offices—a clear sign of negligence toward the profession.

Proper sector structuring would not only help identify and recognize professional interpreters but also ensure they receive fair compensation for their services. Additionally, creating an official Order of Interpreters is essential to address these ongoing challenges and establish clear professional standards. As Tseng observed, a strong professional association can mandate that all practitioners become registered members to practice legally. While accreditation is often the purview of government bodies, ATIPCO could still play a significant role in setting professional standards and accrediting practitioners, thereby elevating the field's credibility and safeguarding its future.

7. Conclusion

This research on the interpretation market in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has provided valuable insights into its structure and the key players operating within it. The findings reveal that the market is highly disorganized and excessively open, allowing anyone to self-proclaim as an interpreter due to the absence of proper entry barriers. This lack of regulation has led to significant challenges, including inadequate training for interpreters, the absence of effective market structuring, and minimal intervention by ATIPCO, which is expected to regulate the profession and mitigate the influence of unqualified practitioners. Addressing these issues requires a multi-faceted approach.

First and foremost, interpreter training curricula must be rethought and aligned with international standards to meet the demands of the market. High-quality professional training is the cornerstone for organizing the interpretation market and restoring dignity to the profession. Furthermore, ATIPCO must rise to its responsibilities and act as an effective regulatory body. By drawing inspiration from successful professional associations in other countries, ATIPCO can implement measures to protect the integrity of the profession and establish clearer standards. Finally, the creation of an official Order of Interpreters is essential to enforce regulations, recognize qualified professionals, and address the market's structural issues. These steps will not only address the current challenges but also ensure the sustainability and professionalism of the interpretation market in the DRC.

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