

Developing metacognitive competences in translation from/into African languages: a case for rethinking the curriculum and practice of translation

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Abstract

This study examines the role of metacognitive competences in the translation processes involving African languages. Translators often lack the awareness of their cognitive processes and the impact it has on translation quality when faced with significant challenges in rendering accurate and culturally sensitive translations. The study therefore, sets out to investigate why translators, especially those translating from/into African languages should develop metacognitive competences, and determine the future of translating from/into African languages as a result of the development of metacognitive competences. This study employed a mixed method research design. Data was collected qualitatively through interviews, observations and documentary research, and quantitatively through questionnaires administered to some translation students in ASTI offering translation from/into African languages as well as professional translators. The quantitative data was analyzed using

bar charts and descriptive statistics, while the qualitative data was analyzed using the thematic approach. The findings reveal that 53.9% of translators engage in assessing their work but only 30.3% actively monitoring it, with a dominant reliance on native consultation (87.9%) for quality assurance. Despite current challenges, including moderate competence levels (49%) and existing barriers (58.3%), the future appears transformative for metacognitive development, with translators overwhelmingly in support for professionalism (85.4%), technology integration (87.5%), and curriculum integration (86.5%). Key recommendations proposed are implementing metacognitive training in the school curricula, using translation logs and digital tools and fund them, and developing policies for digital infrastructure and glossaries, aligning with global trends, as well as establishing community networks for native speaker consultations to ensure cultural fidelity.

Key words: African languages, developing, metacognitive competences, translation.

Résumé

Cette étude met en exergue le rôle des compétences métacognitives dans les processus de traduction impliquant les langues africaines. Les traducteurs n'ont pas souvent, une connaissance des processus cognitifs et de l'impact de ces derniers sur la qualité de la traduction lorsqu'ils sont confrontés à des défis importants pour produire des traductions précises et culturellement sensibles. L'étude vise à explorer pourquoi les traducteurs, particulièrement ceux qui traduisent vers les langues africaines, devraient développer des compétences métacognitives, et déterminer l'avenir de la traduction vers les langues africaines en vue du développement de ces compétences. Cette étude emploie une méthode de recherche mixte. Les données sont collectées d'une part de façon qualitative à travers des interviews, des observations et des recherches documentaires, et

d'autres part de façon quantitative à travers des questionnaires administrés à certains élèves-traducteurs de l'ASTI ainsi qu'à des traducteurs professionnels. Les données quantitatives ont été analysées par des graphiques à bars et des statistiques descriptifs. Tandis que les données qualitatives ont été analysées par une approche thématique. Les résultats montrent que 53,9 % des traducteurs procèdent à l'évaluation de leur travail, mais seulement 30,3 % le supervisent activement, et qu'il existe une dépendance marquée à la consultation de locuteurs natifs (87,9 %) pour l'assurance qualité. Malgré les défis actuels, notamment un niveau de compétence modéré (49 %) et des obstacles existants (58, 3 %), l'avenir paraît transformatif grâce au développement métacognitif. Les traducteurs soutiennent massivement le professionnalisme (85,4 %), l'intégration des technologies (87,5 %) et l'intégration dans les cursus (86,5 %). Les principales recommandations sont les suivantes d'intégrer la formation métacognitive dans les programmes d'études, d'utiliser des journaux de traduction et des outils numériques avec un financement adéquat, de développer des politiques pour les infrastructures numériques et les glossaires en accord avec les tendances mondiales, et d'établir des réseaux communautaires pour la consultation de locuteurs natifs afin d'améliorer la fidélité culturelle.

Mots-clés: *Compétences métacognitives, développement, langues africaines, traduction.*

1. Introduction

The study aims to investigate how metacognitive strategies specifically planning, monitoring, and evaluation can enhance translation quality, productivity, and professionalism in the African language translation context. Flavell (1979:906) defines metacognition as “knowledge and cognition about cognitive phenomena”, which includes metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive regulation. In the context of translation, metacognition provides a framework for understanding how translators comprehend the Source Text (ST), strategize and plan, monitor the translation process and evaluate the Target Text (TT).

The application of metacognitive principles is particularly significant when translating from/into African language. Unlike European languages supported by robust digital resources (dictionaries, translation memories, etc.), African languages often require translators to rely on internal cognitive resources. This study therefore outlines the key tenets of metacognitive theory and its relevance to translation, specifically concerning African languages.

Translation is a multifaceted process involving both linguistic transfer and complex cognitive regulation. Africa is a home to a rich tapestry of over 2000 languages, each representing unique challenges that cannot be treated as a homogeneous category. For instance, Bassa (a Bantu language) presents significant, metacognitive hurdles in tonal phonology and complex verbal morphology, where a slight error in tone completely alters the meaning. Also, translators working with languages such as Ngemba and Lamso frequently encounter “lexical gaps” for technical terms, necessitating the metacognitive strategy of creative adaptation rather than simple equivalence.

Scholars like Bassnett (2002) have articulated the necessity of navigating cultural barriers in translation. This perspective is crucial when addressing translation into African languages, where cultural intricacies such as kinship or proverbs, are deeply embedded in the language itself. Hacker (2009) defines metacognition as the awareness of how one learns, an evaluation of their learning needs, generating strategies to meet these needs and implementing the strategies. This aligns with current educational trends that emphasize the cultivation of higher-order thinking skills in language training. That is why Banda (2020) states that as African languages continue to play a vital role in the social, economic, and political development of the continent, the demand for skilled translators who can work with these languages is increasing.

This study therefore sets out to explore how developing metacognitive competences can enhance translation practices from/into African languages, building on the foundational work of translation scholars, such as Reiss and Vermeer (1984), who emphasize on the importance of functional approaches in translation. This research investigates how metacognitive awareness can inform a translator's strategic decisions when dealing with African linguistic and cultural contexts.

Statement of the problem

Despite the increasing demand for translation from/into African languages, there is insufficient awareness and recognition of how metacognitive competences impact translation quality. Translators often operate without a clear understanding of their own cognitive processes and the strategies they employ, which leads to inconsistencies in translation accuracy and cultural relevance. This

is specifically problematic given the typological diversity between African and especially Cameroonian languages. This lack of metacognitive reflection not only affects the translators' performance but also limits the broader recognition of the intrinsic values of African languages in the translation landscape. This problem statement reveals the critical issues by evaluating how structured metacognitive development can be operationalized to enhance translation accuracy and cultural fidelity.

Research questions

This study has the following research questions:

1. Why should translators, especially those translating from/into African languages develop metacognitive competences?
2. What is the projection of translating from/into African languages as a result of the development of metacognitive competences?

Research objectives

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Identify, analyze and explain why translators, especially those translating from/into African languages should develop metacognitive competences.
2. Determine the projection of translating from/into African languages as a result of the development of metacognitive competences.

2. Literature review

The following review synthesises related literature, with special focus on translation theory and metacognition for a theoretical foundation for the study.

Translation

Catford (1965:20) states that 'translation is the replacement of textual material in one language by equivalent textual material in another language'. This definition regards translation as a process of coding between source language (SL) and target language (TL). However, this restrictive view was expanded by Nida and Taber (1969:12) stating that "translation consists of reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style". This definition is the first to take equivalence, style, and meaning into consideration. By referring to the "closest natural equivalent", it implies the definition takes account of the cultural aspect of translation. In this definition, translation involves the transposition of thought expressed in one language by one social group, as a process of cultural decoding, recoding, and encoding.

Nord (1991:28), focuses on the aim and function of the translation on the receiving audience, giving this definition: "translation is the production of a functional target text maintaining a relationship with a given source text that is specified according to the intended or demanding function of the target text". Nord's definition clearly reflects her closeness to the 'skopos theory' (Reiss and Vermeer, 1984), which focuses on the purpose of the translation.

Newmark (1998) affirms that to translate is to choose. Choice depends on criteria and criteria are subordinate to theory. Thus, according to Newmark, translation as a process is a complicated operation with various forces operating in various directions. However, he thinks that translation can act like a bridge between divergent cultures and can help in translating cultural values. In doing so, he brings out the dynamism of translation as a process.

Metacognition

Metacognition, often considered as thinking about thinking, serves as the cognitive engine for the strategic choices mentioned above. The current study examines why translators' metacognitive competences and awareness is indispensable when translating between Indo-European and Cameroonian languages, or between Cameroonian languages. Metacognition in translation refers to the awareness and regulation of one's cognitive processes during translation tasks.

Gile (2021) views metacognitive competences as skills that involve monitoring, evaluating, and controlling cognitive processes in translation. He highlights the importance of self-awareness in recognizing one's strengths and weaknesses, which is crucial for continuous professional development in translation. This definition underscores the significance of metacognitive competences in translation as essential skills that enhance the translator's ability to reflect on and regulate their cognitive processes, leading to improved translation quality. That is, self-awareness in professional development.

Equally, Pym (2021) upholds that metacognitive awareness is crucial for translators to adapt their approaches based on the demands of the text and the target audience. Contrary to Gile, Pym argues that, metacognitive awareness is the primary tool translators use to adapt their methods to specific demands of the text and audience. Similarly, Bontempo and Rocco (2021) opine metacognition to be the capacity to reflect on and adapt one's translation strategies, which is essential for problem-solving and decision-making in translation. These definitions emphasize the critical role of metacognition in improving translation practices and outcomes.

In consonance with Pym, Bontempo and Rocco, Flavell (1969) had broached the notion of metacognition earlier by proposing the following strategies related to the topic:

Planning strategies (pre-task)

- i) Goal setting: define the communicative purpose and quality criteria for the translation.
- ii) Task analysis: identify text type, register, expected reader profile, and likely problem areas.
- iii) Strategy selection: choose possible procedures (e.g., literal verse adaptive translation; when to consult experts).
- iv) Resource planning: decide which references, corpora, consultants, or tools to use and when.

Monitoring strategies (During task)

- i) Self-questioning: ask one's self questions (e.g., Does this rendition preserve intended effect?).
- ii) Comprehension checking: pause to re-read/confirm understanding of source segments.
- iii) Strategy switching: detect failure or inefficiency of a chosen approach and change strategy (e.g., from literal to descriptive rendering).
- iv) Time and effort monitoring: notice signs of overload and adjust pace or break the task.
- v) Note taking/flagging: mark problematic segments for later research or consultation.

Evaluation/regulation strategies (Post task)

- i) Self-evaluation: review and judge the product against predefined criteria (accuracy, fluency, cultural appropriateness).
- ii) Peer review/consultation: seek feedback from colleagues or community informants and incorporate it.

- iii) Error analysis and revision: identify recurring problems and systematically correct them.
- iv) Documentation: record decisions, coined terms, and justification for future reuse (glossaries; decision logs).

The above strategies put forward by Flavel (1969) are not necessarily exhaustive but serve as a three-dimensional checklist for metacognitive awareness during the process of translation and intercultural mediation.

Psychology

Every translation is a mental process, whose outcome is as a result of human reasoning and intelligence. This concept was introduced in translation in the late 20th century when scholars began the cognitive processes involved in translation. This makes translation studies as an interdisciplinary field that incorporates psychological theories. Psychology also relates to metacognition in translation because it helps in cognitive processes like attention, reflective thinking, self-regulation and self-awareness involved in translation activities that require translators to manage their emotional intelligence such as stress, anxiety and motivation. Managing these help them prioritize task, and make decisions of ambiguity, cultural nuance and time. Thus, some psychologist came forth with their definitions of psychology.

The American Psychological Association (APA, 2020) views psychology as the scientific study of behaviour and mental processes. The APA opines that, translators rely heavily on their working memory to process and retain information which helps them give attention to the source text, understand its meaning, and then convey the meaning in the target language. Their cognitive flexibility fails because of the cultural and linguistic diversity that exist between languages. However, psychology is

relevant to this study because it helps explore the intersection of cognitive processes, metacognition and cultural/linguistic diversity in translation.

Katan (2021) considers psychology as the science that studies behaviour and mental processes, seeking to understand individuals and groups. This definition is relevant to this study because when applying psychological principles to translation, one explores how translators enhance their awareness of their cognitive competences, strategies, decision making and identify challenges which improve translation quality and efficiency.

These definitions highlight the scientific study of behaviour, mental processes and the interplay between thought and environment as the core of psychology. This concept, specifically cognitive psychology is relevant to this study as it plays a crucial role in understanding and enhancing translators' metacognitive competences. Since metacognition details cognitive processes, understanding these processes from a psychological view helps translators working with Cameroonian languages, to plan, monitor and evaluate their work. The complex nature in metacognition helps them acquire metacognitive skills and a broader dimension in self-regulation and critical thinking.

3. Theoretical framework

This section outlines the different theories that underpin the study. They include the metacognitive theory, the sociolinguistic theory and the interpretive theory.

Metacognitive theory

The main focus of this theory is developing translators' ability to think critically, solve problems and make informed decisions to improve translation quality. Metacognition defined as 'thinking

about thinking' or 'knowing about knowing', is also known as the 'theory of psychology'. It describes how translators manage their cognitive load and working memory in the translation process. One of the prominent researchers on metacognition, Flavell (1979:232), defines metacognition as "the ability to actively monitor and regulate one's own thought processes." In the context of translation, metacognition plays a critical role as it enables translators to make informed decisions, especially when dealing with less-resourced Cameroonian languages such as Bassa and Ngemba. The challenges in translating from/into these languages often require a heightened level of conscious awareness and strategic problem-solving skills.

This theory therefore fosters understanding and regulates cognitive processes. Applying the metacognitive theories in translating from/into Cameroonian languages allows trainee translators, translation lecturers and professional translators to examine how to plan, monitor, evaluate, and adjust their cognitive strategies in managing challenges related to cultural nuances, lexical ambiguities, or syntactic complexities. Thus, by fostering metacognitive skills, translators can critically assess their decisions, consider alternative strategies, and ensure cultural fidelity. This reflective practice contributes to producing more accurate, contextually appropriate translations that respect the intrinsic values of African languages.

Sociolinguistic theory

The sociolinguistic theory of translation focuses on the use of language. That is, how and why people use language in the society. Proponents of this theory include Newmark and Nida. Sociolinguists are interested in the function of language. As such, a

translator is not bound by the constraints of word-for-word or structure-for-structure translation. Since the aim is to reproduce as closely as possible, the same effect on the target reader as on the reader of the original text. Sociolinguists view translation as an act of communication. To them, translation always involves inter-lingual communication, based on language (Brislin, 1982), that is, emphasising the societal context and the relationship between language and culture. As such, translation is not simply the transfer of message from one language to another but from a given source to a given set of receptors, each with its own background and culture. This is so because there is a close relationship between language and culture; and language cannot be properly treated except in terms of its status and function.

According to Nida (1991), any translation based on this theory must give considerable attention to the paralinguistic and extra linguistic features of the oral and written message. For example, features such as tone of voice, loudness, peculiarity of enunciation, gestures, stance, and eye contact are obviously important in oral communication. Language therefore seems to be at the centre of this theory even though it is much concerned with the function of language in communication.

This theory is important to this study because it makes us understand that word for word translation is not a must. The idiomaticity of the sentence or phrase is important. What one translates should not be the words but what is embedded in the words. Given that Cameroonian languages are tonal in nature, this theory finds relevance to the study because it brings together languages (French, English, a Cameroonian language) which are diametrically opposed in grammar and morphological characteristics. The theory bears emphasis on the way cultural

elements are translated and also whether the target audience is satisfied. This theory enables translators navigate dialectal differences and cultural references effectively and indicates how social factors influence meaning. This enhances the translator's metacognitive ability to adapt translation strategies accordingly for oral and written communication, while considering the social, cultural, and historical contexts of languages, which is essential for effective translation.

Interpretive theory

The thrust of this theory is that translation should be focused on the intended meaning or sense and not on the transfer of words of the source text (ST) or source language text (SLT). The interpretive theory, often referred to as the interpretative approach, is termed the 'theory of sense' (Baker, 1998:112). This theory is associated with a group of scholars known as the Paris School namely Lederer, Seleskovitch, Herbulot, Delisle and Pergnier, with Delisle and Seleskovitch posing as the most outstanding proponents. The critical mind set developed by the translators when translating helps them in decision making on multiple interpretations of the source text as they will be more culturally sensitive.

The rationale of the interpretative theory of translation is not to translate words but the transfer of meaning and sense. This means understanding what the original author intended to communicate, not just the dictionary meanings of individual words. The theory emphasizes a deep comprehension of the source text's meaning, taking into account not only the linguistic elements but extra-linguistic knowledge (encyclopaedic knowledge, contextual knowledge, and the translator's own cognitive complements). Once the sense is fully grasped, the translator then reformulates it

in the target language (TL), using appropriate linguistic means that convey the same sense to the target audience (TA). It acknowledges the subjective nature of the translation process and recognizes that translators play an interpretative role. Translators must interpret the sense of the source text before rendering it in the TL, considering not only the literal meaning but also the cultural connotations and implications.

This theory finds relevance in this study because it emphasizes the importance of pragmatic elements. That is, translators translating from/into African languages need to interpret the sense of the source text within its specific communicative context, to ensure effective cross-cultural communication. Equally, the act of deverbalizing aligns with metacognition. The interpretive theory explicitly moves beyond word-for-word translation, emphasizing the comprehension of 'sense' and its subsequent deverbalization (detaching the meaning from the source language) before re-expression in the TL. This process of understanding deeply, detaching from form, and then re-creating is inherently metacognitive as it requires translators to monitor their comprehension, regulate their approach, evaluate their choice and decision-making

The theory champions the cognitive and communicative aspects of translation, focusing on the dynamic process of meaning transfer. This aligns perfectly with the development of metacognitive competences, especially when navigating the rich cultural and linguistic landscapes of Cameroonian languages, where a focus on 'sense' over 'words' is not just beneficial but often essential for a successful and culturally appropriate translation. This theory aligns with the idea that translation is an act of transposition of

thought deemed relevant for Cameroonian indigenous languages where conveying cultural meaning is paramount.

Methodology

This section provides an outline of the research methodology employed in this study. It presents the research design, as well as the methods of data collection and analysis. Qualitative data were collected mainly in the form of interviews administered to translation teachers and translation practitioners, to determine the importance of cultivating metacognitive skills among translators and translation professionals, specifically those working with Cameroonian indigenous languages like Bassa, Ngemba and Lamnso, replete with tonal variations, context-sensitive nuances and cultural metaphors. Hence, twenty (20) translation practitioners formed the core of interviewees, who were the object of semi-structured interviews. Qualitative data collection equally involved participant observation, which makes this study to fall under the purview of action research.

Research was conducted in a natural classroom setting involving students offering translation into and from their native languages or mother tongue. This enabled the researcher to monitor, engage and analyse the cognitive processes that trainees went through, while translating from languages of limited diffusion to languages of wider diffusion (that is, English or French). Quantitative research procedures mostly involved the administering of questionnaires to fifty (50) trainee translators, to delve through their thought processes while translating from an indigenous to a non-indigenous language, and vice-versa. In terms of data analysis, the qualitative data was analysed through the thematic

approach while the quantitative data was analysed with the help of bar charts as well as descriptive statistics.

1. *Data presentation and analysis*

This section presents and analyses the data in relation to the research objectives which were to identify, analyze and explain why translators, especially those translating from/into Cameroonian languages should develop metacognitive strategies and determine the way forward for translating from/into these languages based on an eventual development of metacognitive competences.

Profile of respondents

Section one of the questionnaire established the respondent's profile. It identified their primary profession (e.g., Professional Translator, Trainee Translator, and Linguistic Scholar) and their years of professional experience in translation or related fields. This section also assessed their application of metacognitive strategies (e.g., planning, self-monitoring, and evaluation) in translating from/into local languages. Furthermore, it explored their primary roles in translation processes and their development or awareness of metacognitive approaches to translation tasks. Finally, respondents provided estimates of the current usage and awareness of metacognitive strategies among translators working from/into African languages in Cameroon. The data are presented using cross-tabulation to facilitate comparative analysis.

Table 1: Profile of respondents

Variables	Category/Scale	Percentage
Gender	Male	38%
	Female	62%
Profession	Trainee	80%
	Professional Translators	20%
Years of experience	1- 2 years	60%
	2-3 Years	20%
	4-6 Years	10%
	6 years and above	10%
Language combination	English A - French B	50%
	French A – English B	24%
	English A - French B – Arabic C	04%
	French A – English B- Spanish C	04%
	French A – English B- German C	10%
	English A - French B-Spanish C	04%
	French A – English B- Arabic C	04%

The respondents' profiles provide critical context for interpreting data collected on metacognitive competences in translating from/into local languages. The gender distribution pitting 62% female respondents as opposed to 38% male respondents, aligns with trends in Cameroon's translation training programs, where female participation is often higher, particularly among trainees. This demographic information may influence perspectives on metacognitive strategies because gender differences could suggestively entail disparities in reflective practices, though further qualitative data would be needed to confirm this in the context of translation from/into local languages.

The professional composition, 80% for trainee translators against 20% for professional translators indicates a sample skewed towards novices, which aligns with the research's focus on educational interventions for developing metacognitive

competences. Trainee translators, comprising the majority, were in academic milieus especially the University of Buea, where lecturers emphasize strategies like self-assessment and problem-solving skills. The smaller proportion of professional translators (20%) suggests limited representation of experienced practitioners, which may constrain insights into advanced metacognitive applications in professional settings. However, their inclusion provides valuable perspectives on practical challenges, such as navigating cultural nuances in African languages like Lamnso or Yemba, as highlighted in the interview guide.

The experience distribution, 60% with 1–2 years and 20% with 2–3 years reinforces the novice-heavy sample, thereby tallying 80% of respondents having less than three years of experience. This signals that observations were captured in early-stage translation practices, where metacognitive competences are still to be fully developed. The limited representation of experienced translators, 20% with 4+ years, may restrict insights into long-term skill application but aligns with the research objective of identifying training needs for emerging translators. The age range of the sample, 80% aged 21–30, complements this data. This indicates a young cohort likely enrolled in or recently graduated from translation programmes, highly receptive to educational interventions for metacognitive skill development. That is, such skills are not yet automatic for the age range 21–30.

The language combination data reveal a strong focus on English–French bilingualism (74% combined for English A – French B and French A – English B), reflecting Cameroon’s bilingual context. However, the minimal inclusion of African languages (e.g., Lamnso or Yemba) in reported combinations is notable, as about 36% of respondents reported trilingual combinations involving

Arabic, Spanish, or German. This suggests a gap in the application of metacognitive competences to African language translation, as the interview guide emphasizes languages like Lamnso and Yemba. The predominance of European language pairs may reflect resource availability or curriculum focus in Cameroon's translation programs, highlighting a need for targeted training to address African language translation challenges, such as cultural complexity and limited terminological resources, as noted in the interview guide.

These findings address the research objective of understanding the context for developing metacognitive competences, supporting the hypothesis that structured training enhances translation quality for African languages. The novice-heavy, young, and bilingual sample underscores the importance of educational strategies (e.g., curriculum integration, as per the interview guide) to foster self-awareness and self-regulation. The limited focus on African languages in the reported combinations suggests a need for further investigation into barriers, such as resource scarcity, which may impede metacognitive skill application in this domain. Future research could explore how these demographic and professional characteristics influence the adoption of technologies like CAT tools, as emphasized in the interview guide, to enhance metacognitive competences for African language translation.

Descriptive findings

This section explores the data collected from questionnaires and analysed based on the research objectives.

Quantitative analysis

Stemming from its mixed method research quantitative data was collected through questionnaires administered to fifty (50) trainee

translators at the Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters interested. From the questionnaire items culled from trainee translators, data obtained was analysed and presented below.

- As to the frequency of translation from/into local languages (Q6); 60% mentioned rarely, 20% said occasionally, 12% replied not very often and only 8% mentioned frequently. This questionnaire item sought to explore the engagement and/or contact of trainee translators with local languages during their training which could be transposed to their eventual practice once on the field as professionals.
- As to their familiarity with the term “metacognition” (Q7), in a bid to obtain insight about their awareness of metacognitive concepts; 54% responded in the negative while 16% responded in the affirmative and 30% were evasive as per their understanding of the concept.
- Asked on the importance for translators working with local languages to reflect on their translation process (Q8); 68% found it very important, 30% found it important while 2% did not find it to be of any necessity. This questionnaire item assessed the perceived necessity of reflective practices.
- Asked about the well-foundedness of **developing metacognitive competences in translating from/into looking languages (Q9)**, that it, seeking to explore perceived advantages such as improved accuracy and cultural fidelity; 44% talked of improved accuracy, 24% mentioned cultural fidelity, 16% talked of self-awareness, 8% talked of improved problem-solving skills, 8% had no idea whatsoever.
- As to how metacognitive competences can be developed in trainee translators, exploring development pathways like

mentorship and training (Q16); 38% talked of practising and experience, 26% talked of mentorship and coaching, 20% mentioned curriculum integration and training while 16% made reference to workshops and seminars.

- Asked if they agreed that developing metacognitive competences could enhance professionalism and value of local languages on the global translation landscape (Q17); 84% responded in the affirmative, 14% were not definite and 2% responded negatively. This questionnaire item sought to inventory the perception of the impact of metacognitive competences on translation professionalism.
- As to what role technology plays in developing metacognitive competences in translating from/into local Cameroonian languages (Q18), 42% viewed technology as important, 30% considered it as very important, 20% thought it not to be very important while 8% did not attach any importance to technology impacting metacognitive competences.
- With reference to the challenges or limitations foreseen in developing metacognitive competences in translating from/into local languages (Q19); 58% of the respondents foresaw challenges, 28% were undecided while 14% did not foresee any barriers in developing metacognitive competences.
- As to whether they could recommend integrating metacognitive skill development into translation curricula (Q20); 84% of the respondents affirmed they would, 12% of the respondents were undecided while 04% negated. This questionnaire item evaluated support for incorporating metacognitive training into educational programs for translators.

- Unto their assessment of metacognitive competency in translating from/into local languages (Q15); 48% of the respondents affirmed to be competent, 30% admitted not being very competent, 12% considered themselves as not competent while 8% replied as being very competent.

From the items culled from professional translators based on the semi-structured interview guide, data obtained was analysed and presented below.

The respondents' emphasis on self-awareness and strategic thinking aligns with the study's focus on why metacognitive competences are essential for translators working with our local languages. For example, one respondent (R3⁵) reiterated on the need for good metacognitive skills when translating oral narratives from Lamnso into English for this will bring along challenges in preserving proverbial meaning and adjust strategies accordingly. This perspective underscores the need for translators to develop reflective skills to enhance translation accuracy and cultural relevance, supporting the notion that such competences are crucial for navigating the unique linguistic and cultural landscape of African languages.

As to how translation education programs could prepare students for the future demands of translation in local languages; the respondents mentioned the need for the structured integration of pre-translation planning, real-time monitoring, and community-based evaluation within the curriculum. This aligns with the study's focus on identifying metacognitive strategies that enhance translation quality. For example, R5 employed real time digital

⁵ **R** will be used to codify Respondent making reference to professional translators we interviewed for our qualitative analysis

tools to monitor their progress; such as ensuring tonal accuracy in Yemba voice-overs which is critical for audience engagement. By emphasizing strategic planning and community feedback, these techniques enable translators to address the unique challenges of local languages, ensuring cultural relevance and accuracy. This approach supports the study's broader aim of elevating the recognition of Cameroonian languages in global translation contexts by fostering translations that are both precise and culturally resonant, thereby enhancing their communicative impact and appreciation.

Unto whether the development of metacognitive competences will impact work as a translator in the future, the respondents' vision of metacognitive competences as a foundation for adapting to future demands synced with the study's focus on determining their long-term impact on local language translation. For instance, when translating e-commerce content into Ngemba, metacognitive skills helps assess challenges in rendering technical jargon and adapt it for a local market. By emphasizing their role in addressing complex projects and mentoring others, the response underscores how these competences enhance translation accuracy and cultural relevance, contributing to the broader recognition and appreciation of local languages in global translation contexts. This supports the study's aim to illustrate the transformative potential of metacognitive skills in elevating the status and impact of Cameroonian languages in diverse communicative settings.

As to the role of technology, such as CAT tools or MT, in enhancing metacognitive competences, participants for the sample availed insights into the role of CAT tools and MT in supporting planning, monitoring, and evaluation. In this regard, CAT tools' inclusion directly relates to the study's exploration of how

metacognitive competences enhance translation quality in local languages. By highlighting the reflective use of technology to ensure linguistic accuracy and cultural sensitivity, their response illustrates how these tools amplify metacognitive skills, contributing to precise and culturally resonant translations. This supports the study's broader aim of fostering translations that are both impactful and culturally authentic.

Summary of results

This section integrates quantitative data from questionnaires, qualitative insights from interviews with experienced translators and lecturers. The analysis evaluates how metacognitive development, strategic deployment, and developmental pathways shape translation quality from/into local languages, as mandated by Cameroon's linguistic diversity and the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism. By triangulating these sources, the discussion elucidates the cognitive, operational, and institutional factors influencing translators' performance in under-resourced linguistic ecosystems, affirming whether each research question has been answered and objectives attained.

Answering the first research question; why should translators, especially those translating from/into African languages develop metacognitive competences? Statistically, findings revealed that; Translators recognize the importance of reflection and cultural fidelity but lack formal training in metacognition. Despite the rare engagement with African languages (60%) by trainee translators which limits reflective practice essential for quality translation, metacognitive competences help bridge the gap between intuitive practice and structured expertise aligned to the research objective. The results reveal that, although trainee translators intuitively

reflect on their work, they lacked structured frames and tools to guide and enhance their translation from/into diverse local languages. It also revealed that given the cultural and linguistic complexity of Cameroonian languages, metacognitive competences such as planning, monitoring are essential for navigating these complexities, ensuring cultural, faithful and contextually appropriate translations.

Another aspect of the study focused on determining the projections for translating from/into African languages as a result of the development of metacognitive competences. The findings showed that, a significant portion of translators gave a strong support for professionalism (84%), technology (72%), and curriculum integration, (84%) suggesting a promising future for translation from/into local languages in the global translation landscape. Developing metacognitive competences can lead to improved translation quality, increased efficiency, and growing demand for professional translators, in translations involving Cameroonian languages. This equips trainee translators with the ability to deliberately plan, monitor, and evaluate their translation process which will enhance quality and efficiency, better navigation of resource and nuance.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study confirms that metacognition is essential for achieving professional resilience, cultural authenticity, and successful navigation of complex translation challenges. Interviews with seasoned translators and translation trainers reveals an advanced and integrated use of metacognitive strategies to overcome challenges while translating from one language into another. Translators employ meticulous planning

(e.g., Bassa documentaries) and continuous monitoring (e.g., Fulfulde proverbs), validating theoretical models while showing practical depth. Metacognition is critically linked to cultural competence, requiring immersion (e.g., Ngondo festivals) and robust networks (Pan-African Translators' Network) to update and authenticate terminology, addressing the unique challenges of translating from and into local languages. Metacognition is seen as the enabler for complex projects and crucial for mentoring the next generation. CAT software and Machine Translation (MT) are not merely efficiency tools but could act as reflective amplifiers, aiding in monitoring and strategic revision.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Interview Guide

Developing Metacognitive Competences in Translating from/into African Language

Section A: Why develop metacognitive competences?

1. In your opinion, why is it essential for translators, especially those working from/into African languages, to develop metacognitive competences?

Section B: Future of African language translation

1. How can translation education programs prepare students for the future demands of African language translation in an era of AI?
2. How do you think the development of metacognitive competences will impact your work as a translator in the future?
3. What role do you see technology, such as CAT tools or MT, playing in enhancing your metacognitive competences?

Appendix II: Questionnaire

Questionnaire addressed to trainee translators and translation professionals.

Section A: Demographic Information

1. What is your age range?
 - 21-30
 - 31-40
 - 41-49
 - 50 and above
2. What is your gender?
 - Male
 - Female
3. What is your current role?
 - Trainee Translator
 - Professional Translator
4. What is your language combination?
 - English A - French B
 - French A- English B

- Other (please, specify.....)
- 5. For how many years have you been studying/practicing translation from/into African languages?
 - 1 year
 - 2-3 years
 - 4 -6years
 - 6years and above

Section B: Explaining why translators of African languages should develop metacognitive competences

- 6. Are you familiar to the term 'Metacognition' or 'thinking about your thinking' or 'Reflective Practice' ?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Neutral
- 7. How important it is for translators working from/into African languages to reflect on their translation process?
 - Important
 - Very Important
 - Not Important
 - Not very important
- 8. What are the main benefits of developing metacognitive competences in translating from/into African languages? (Select all that apply)
 - Improved accuracy
 - Cultural fidelity
 - Increased self-awareness on strategies
 - Enhance problem solving during translation
 - Others (Please, specify.....)
- 9. How do you assess your own metacognitive competences in translating from/into African languages?
 - Competent
 - Very competent
 - Not Very competent
 - Not competent

Section C: Future of translation for African languages

10. How can metacognitive competences be developed in trainee translators/professional translators?
 - Practicing and experience
 - Mentorship and coaching
 - Curriculum integration and training
 - Workshops and seminars
 - Other (please, specify.....)
- 11) Do you agree that, developing metacognitive competences will enhance professionalism and value of African languages in the global translation landscape?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Neutral
- 12) What important role does technology plays in developing metacognitive competences in translating from into African languages?
 - Very important
 - Important
 - Not very important
 - Not important
- 13) Are there any challenges or limitations that you foresee in developing metacognitive competences in translating from/into African languages?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Neutral
- 14) Would you recommend integrating metacognitive skill development into translation curricula?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Neutral