

# Introduction

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The *Réseau Lexicologie, terminologie traduction (LTT)*, comprising academics and researchers who use French as a language of science, is the driving force behind the publication of this volume dedicated to *Translation and Interpretation in Sub-Saharan Africa*. The LTT Network, which has been present and active on the African continent for many years, offers small research grants to doctoral students from the South on an annual basis. In February 2014, it organised a conference at *Université Cheikh Anta Diop* in Dakar, on the theme : ‘Supporting a description of linguistic and cultural heritage in the service of multilingualism in sub-Saharan Africa’. In the wake of that meeting, and still in Dakar, the LTT Network facilitated another seminar on the development of university curricula for French-speaking translators and interpreters of African languages, with a view to professionalising language and literature programmes. That was the genesis of our collective endeavour, which we encourage you to read.

Following a call launched in the spring of 2017, all fourteen papers featured in this volume were selected by the members of the scientific committee. We remain indebted to them for their great availability and valuable input. As is often the case, the editorial work on this volume turned out to be particularly long. While this delay can be explained by increased demands stemming from our academic responsibilities, it was compounded by our concern to produce a book that meets the highest standards of scientific publishing. The authors were not spared from the numerous challenges linked to accessing knowledge as well as expressing the knowledge articulated in their papers. At a time when in Africa the Internet is often the only means available to consult recent scientific publications, we crave their indulgence for having been overly vigilant, and somewhat intrusive, regarding the sources cited and originality of the subject matter. We thank the authors for accepting to revise their contributions several times and for displaying exemplary patience.

Issues related to multilingual education, training and the identification of translation and interpretation needs were underscored in the background of a significant number

of papers, when they were not the main focus of reflection. As concerns the training of translators and conference interpreters in the conventional sense, the experience of the Pan-African Masters Consortium in Interpretation and Translation (PAMCIT) was worth describing (Carmen Delgado-Luchner and Justine Ndongo-Keller). Similarly, Téléphore Ngarambe provided a description of the curriculum recently developed by the University of Rwanda, while other contributors, including Segun Afolabi, Emmanuel Kambaja Musampa and Aly Sambou, highlighted the issue of skills, types of translation and interpretation and the possible universality of models.

Key international organisations on the African continent (such as the United Nations Office at Nairobi or the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa), manage translation and interpretation services. However, beyond the traditional paradigm of interpretation and translation which is dedicated to international relations and primarily uses colonial languages, it is imperative to invest in public service translation and interpretation into the language of citizens. Emmanuel Kuto addresses the issue of a ‘eurocentric and pro-institutional’ model, given that the need for community translation (Aly Sambou) and communication for development (Henry Tourneux) is obvious. Africa’s huge linguistic diversity presupposes that perfectly reliable language mediators can be trained, especially where there is a humanitarian crisis (Joshua Goldsmith, Barbara Moser-Mercer and Ian Newton). Challenges associated with providing high-level professional interpretation and translation in languages that are ignored by renowned translation and interpretation schools, seem to be fundamental when it comes to guaranteeing international justice and, more generally, access by citizens to all their rights. Justine Ndongo-Keller and Carmen Delgado-Luchner demonstrate this fact, looking back on the experience of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), as does Marcel Diki-Kidiri when presenting the case of Sängö in the Central African Republic.

From the outset, the great linguistic fragmentation that characterizes Africa raises the issue of languages that should be taught and languages of instruction (Milburga Atcero, Marcel Diki-Kidiri, Maxime Manifi). Successfully meeting the challenge of training also implies being concerned about the lexical resources available to express modernity, as illustrated by Deris Nge Meh and Marcellin Nkenlifack and his colleagues. And with them, many contributors, such as Marcel Diki-Kidiri and Maxime Manifi, hold that very often, it is the exercise of translation that enhances vocabulary.

We are pleased to note that all the analyses in the collective publication take an in-depth look at all the issues considered in the call for papers. Another cause for satisfaction is the great balance between the texts in English and French, although we deplore the absence of papers in Portuguese and Swahili. English is mainly used by our colleagues from Cameroon and Rwanda, two countries where it has the status of an official language. As the editors of this book, however, we regret that we were hardly able to get contributors from outside the former French and Belgian colonies. Since there is no doubt that the Horn of Africa, East Africa and Southern Africa are also very dynamic regions as regards translation, interpretation and language planning, it is our fervent hope that this volume will trigger subsequent publications.