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## The Power of Film Translation in Cameroon: Dubbing or Subtitling?

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### ABSTRACT

This study is aimed at demonstrating the capacity of film translation through dubbing and subtitling in Cameroon. The objective is to show how powerful dubbing and subtitling as film translation modes are, as well as, propose the best and suitable mode for the country. The methodology involved basically, a critical review of some relevant studies carried out in film translation. This includes the evaluation of the various film and cinema translation modes currently in use; a classification of countries by translation modes and a brief history outline of film translation. The various reasons which may encourage certain countries to adopt dubbing or subtitling as a mode of film translation and factors determining the choice of dubbing and subtitling are also highlighted and analysed. Findings indicate that subtitling is the choice for Cameroon.

**Keywords:** *Film Translation Mode, Cinema Translation, Dubbing, Subtitling, Cameroon*

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## 1. Introduction

Countries interested in audiovisual translation (AVT) which includes screen translation of television programmes, films, etc., eventually develop a chosen or desired mode of translating films and subscribe to one of the following three modes: dubbing and subtitling as far as cinema translation is concerned, or voiceover, in the case of television (TV) translation. The decision as to which film translation mode to choose is not by chance. It derives from several factors, such as historical circumstances, traditions, techniques to which the audience is accustomed, the costs, and the position of both the target and the source cultures in a national and international context (Szarkowska 2005, Dries 1995). This may be true for developed countries which, based on the reasons cited above, had already chosen their AVT mode. However, in a developing country such as Cameroon which is still to choose its own AVT mode, that decision will well depend on other factors, in addition to those already mentioned above. For instance, the situation on the film industry, TV programmes, political considerations and the official and indigenous languages used in the country. Right now, all cinema halls are closed due to the advent of digital versatile discs/digital

video discs (DVDs), dubbed, subtitled and voiced over films/programmes which are currently being watched in homes, churches, under trees and in classrooms. The problem here is that these products are dubbed or subtitled by amateurs (with poor quality products) and foreigners. Thus, the following questions are raised: why can Cameroon not officially adopt AVT as film translation modes so that it can dub and subtitle its own products? Which AVT mode to adopt? This paper will attempt to answer these questions by focusing on the AVT modes cited above, their characteristics and the factors that determine the choice of one or the other.

The objectives of this paper are therefore to (1) show the power of film translation through dubbing and subtitling in Cameroon; (2) assess the characteristics of dubbing and subtitling as modes of film translation; and (3) demonstrate that subtitling may actually be a better choice for Cameroon, if at all, the country decides to officially adopt AVT as a film translation mode.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Modes of Film Translation

Subtitling, dubbing (also known as lip-sync), voice off, and live interpretation on television are the main branches of what is

referred to as multimedia, audio-visual, or screen translation. However, there are two major types of film translation: dubbing and subtitling. On the one hand, dubbing is the method in which the foreign dialogue is adjusted to the mouth and movements of the actor in the film (Szarkowska, 2005, Shuttleworth & Cowie, 1997, Dries 1995) and its aim is seen as making the audience feel as if they were listening to actors actually speaking the target language. In dubbing, the original sound track is completely wiped off (Szarkowska 2005). Subtitling, on the other hand, can be defined as a translation practice that consists in presenting a written text, generally on the lower part of the screen, that endeavours to recount the original dialogue of the speakers, as well as the discursive elements that appear in the image (letters, inserts, graffiti, inscriptions, placards and the like), and the information that is contained on the soundtrack (songs, voices off) (Diaz Cintas & Remael, 2007, Szarkowska, 2005). Luyken et al. (1991) define voice-over as the faithful translation of the original speech which is delivered in an approximately synchronous delivery. It is normally used only in the context of a monologue such as an interview response or a series of responses from a single interviewee. The original sound is either reduced entirely or to a low level of audibility. A common practice is to allow the original sound to be heard for several seconds at the onset of the speech and to have it subsequently reduced so that the translated speech takes over. This contributes to the sense of authenticity in the translation and prevents a degree of mistrust from developing. As a form of language transfer, voice-over is not limited to the translation of brief monologues. It is sometimes used to cover whole programmes such as parliamentary debates, conferences and even imported films (Baranauskiene & Blazeviciene, 2008). In Cameroon, voice-over is practiced mostly in newscasts and done by the journalists themselves and not by professionals which sometimes lead to very poor voice-over quality in terms of meaning and contents (Ayonghe & Enow, 2014). A field survey carried out in the country (Ayonghe, 2015) shows that only two schools of higher learning in the country teach AVT. There are no known professional subtitling or dubbing studios in the country and that, 42 studies so far have been carried out in this area out of which, 24 are on Subtitling, 9 on Dubbing and only 2 in Voice-over. The rest (7) are based on a

combination of the three mentioned modes (Ayonghe, 2015). Since this study is based on film or cinema translation modes (subtitling and dubbing), focus will be on these two modes, as opposed to voice-over which has to do with TV translation.

## 2.2 Classification of Countries by Translation Modes Used

According to The Routledge Encyclopaedia of Translation Studies (1997), the classification of countries by their translation modes is as follows:

First of all, there are source-language countries, known nowadays as English-speaking countries. These include the United States and the United Kingdom, where hardly any films are imported. The foreign films tend to be subtitled rather than dubbed. In Britain, film translation does not appear to be a significant issue as the great majority of imported films are American and require no translation. Nigeria's film industry which is currently ranked as the 2nd largest film industry in the world (after India) based on the number of films released per year (UN statistics news, 2016), can be placed in this group since the language used in their films is mostly English.

Then, there are dubbing countries which are mainly French-, Italian-, German-, and Spanish-speaking countries (sometimes referred to as the **FIGS** group), both in and outside Europe. In these countries, a significant bulk of the film is dubbed. This is due to historical reasons (Szarkowska, 2005) in addition to the fact that in the 1930s, dubbing was the preferred mode for the translation of films in the world's bib-market speech communities (Gottlieb, 1997).

Finally, there are the subtitling countries, which are characterised by an extremely high number of imported films, and consequently there is a great but steady demand for translation. Subtitling is preferred to dubbing in countries such as The Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Greece, Slovenia, Croatia, Portugal and some non-European countries like South Africa. In Belgium and Finland, where there are large communities speaking two languages, films are usually provided with double subtitles. In these countries, dubbing is used only for productions meant for children. The last group has to do with voice-over countries such as Russia or Poland, which in most cases, cannot afford dubbing (The Routledge Encyclopaedia of Translation Studies, 1997). On the whole, it can be stated that especially in Western European countries dubbing is preferred in



larger and more affluent countries which can expect high box office receipts whereas subtitling is used in smaller ones, whose audiences comprise more restricted markets.

Based on the classification above, where will Cameroon be placed? The answer is: "nowhere" because i) Cameroon is known to have 284 indigenous languages (Ethnologue, 2018), two major exoglossic languages (English and French) and Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE), extensively used as lingua franca, and ii) there is so far no chosen and known audiovisual translation mode in the country. Thus, Cameroon is unclassified for now. As it can be seen and as earlier mentioned, we support Szarkowska's (2005) statement that the cost alone does not define the choice of translation mode. Furthermore, in the case of Cameroon with 284 local languages and 2 official languages, it is clear that subtitling with the cheapest cost is the most needed mode here, unfortunately or fortunately, apart from cost, other problems such as political issues will have to be sorted out before making the choice.

### *2.3 A Brief History of Film Translation*

Subtitles were cost-effective and translation was relatively easy in the days of silent movies (Danan, 1991). Film makers could shoot a film and distribute it worldwide by translating the subtitles into various languages. However, film makers faced communication problems in the 1920's with the introduction of sound recordings (the talkies) in 1927 (Danan, 1991). This enabled the audience to hear the actors speak. The films known as the "talkies", limited the audience to a single language which made exporting film to overseas markets problematic. Foreign language movies meant that the films were limited to an audience that spoke the same language. At first, American film companies tried to solve this problem by producing multiple language versions of the same film. This system turned out to be inefficient, uneconomical and artistically of very poor quality. The studios that had been built in France for that purpose began to produce dubbed versions of films instead (Szarkowska, 2005, Danan, 1991).

Dubbing was subsequently introduced. This involved recorded additional sound tracks in a foreign language and inserting them into the original film. It proved to be a complex and expensive process. This caused the film makers to reinvent subtitles whereby the text was readable at the bottom

of the screen without interrupting the picture.

As film production costs rose, it became increasingly difficult for smaller countries to export their productions and – limited by their smaller domestic markets – their home production decreased, which led to a rise in film imports. This has been the case with Cameroon. The wide gap between the larger and smaller countries was to be reflected later in the choice of the film translation mode: larger countries tended to dub imported foreign productions, while smaller ones settled on subtitling (Szarkowska, 2005).

Given that America dominated the movie industry, film production was predominantly in English. Foreign subtitles became a growing trend. The trend became more prominent after World War II when European countries sought to lessen US influence from the screen and began shooting film in their native languages. After the Second World War, it took some time for European economies to recover and in the 1950s larger States, such as France, Italy, Germany and Spain, introduced protective measures aimed at curbing the influence of American films in their territories. At the same time, domestic production in France, Italy, Germany and Spain was supported by the government through various subsidies and loans. By that time it was clear that film had become an extremely influential and profitable medium and everyone wanted to get the largest possible slice of the "film cake" (Szarkowska, 2005).

Because subtitles are the most cost-effective and least intrusive way of communicating language through video, they are still widely used today despite some film makers preferring the less effective dubbing technique. The choice depends on the audience of course. In some countries such as India, subtitling is used to educate the mass, even though other viewers do not like subtitles because they find them distracting and cannot read them quickly enough.

### *2.4 The Various Reasons which Prompted France, Italy, Germany and Spain (the FIGS Group) to Adopt Dubbing as a Mode of Film Translation*

According to Szarkowska (2005) and Danan (1991), there are several factors that contributed to the fact that France decided to adopt dubbing when it comes to translating foreign films. First France always felt it had a cultural mission within the film art form

(Danan, 1991). The French seem to be one of the few nations deeply concerned about the purity of their culture and they strive to protect it from any foreign (mostly American) influence. Second, standardised French was historically a successful instrument of political and cultural centralisation (Danan, 1991). Furthermore, many French speakers believe that their language is superior, and some French speakers appear to be truly convinced that it has remained the lingua franca. That seemed to be true some years ago (Hendrykowski, 1984). This view still persists in official circles, which is reflected in how the Académie Française perceives its role now: «La langue a atteint la plénitude de ses qualités, qui en font depuis deux siècles le langage de l'élite du monde entier. Le rayonnement de la langue française est menacé par l'expansion de l'anglais, plus précisément de l'américain, qui tend à envahir les esprits, les écrits, le monde de l'audiovisuel.».

And last but not least, one of the factors which contribute to the choice of dubbing as the film translation mode is the fact that French are accustomed to hearing French both on TV and cinemas due to a significant number of domestic productions dominating the market. Thus, such audiences automatically demand dubbing. The foregoing reasons make the French dub rather than subtitle foreign films.

Italy, Germany and Spain form a completely different group. Just a few decades ago, they were fascist countries convinced of their own superiority and excellence. The dictators were fully aware that hearing your own language serves to confirm its importance and reinforces a sense of national identity and autonomy (Mera, 1999). For example, in Spain, Franco also ruled against any non-dubbed version in an attempt to keep the supremacy of the national language as the expression of cultural, political and economic power (Del Camino Guetierrez Lansa, 1997). In Germany and in Italy, governments adopted regulations promoting or even enforcing dubbing as the mode of film translation. In Spain, between 1936 and 1975 there were over 90 ministerial guidelines (orders) signed and published which were a form of prescriptive censorship. Showing a film in a foreign language was officially banned because of the evil effects that film release can produce on society (Mera, 1999). Therefore, it is not surprising that movie audiences in Spain, Italy, and Germany have

become accustomed to the film-dubbing technique over the years. Even though the regimes ceased to exist, they indirectly continue to exert a profound influence today.

### *2.5 The Various Reasons Underlying the Choice of Subtitling in other Countries*

In contrast to larger countries, such as France, Italy, Spain and Germany discussed above, smaller countries, like The Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Portugal – to name just a few - followed a different path with regard to film translation. Their decision to adopt subtitling as the major film translation mode was motivated by several factors: small size of their populations, which translated into limited receipts from box office tickets sales, low cost of subtitling in comparison with dubbing, presence of more than one language in a country (e.g. Belgium, Finland, Canada), significant number of imported films. It can be seen that Cameroon classified as a poor or developing country, with comparatively a small population size and many languages (English, French and some 284 local languages) will have no other choice than to choose subtitling as its film translation mode.

### *2.6 Factors Determining the Choice of Dubbing and Subtitling*

Research studies in this area indicate that some countries in the world prefer foreign films to be dubbed, while other countries prefer these films to be subtitled (Mustafa, 2010). This is probably due to factors related to economy, history, culture, ideology, etc., as presented and explained below.

#### *2.6.1 The Economy Factor*

The main economic factor between dubbing and subtitling is the cost. As already mentioned, subtitling is cheaper than dubbing. Consequently, large and rich countries that usually speak a single language go for dubbing, while small and poor countries go for subtitling. There are however, some small central European countries such as Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia that prefer dubbing, despite its high cost (Mustafa, 2010). These are exceptional cases. According to Zatlin (2005), it can cost up to 15 times more to dub a film than to add subtitles. Cameroon which is considered a third world country or a developing country, with 284 indigenous languages and two official languages, will certainly fall in the subtitling choice group.

#### *2.6.2 The History Factor*



An account of the historical factors that had an influence over the choice of the film translation mode in some European countries (FIGS group) as well as the influence of America on these countries was given by Danan (1991) and supported by Szarkowska (2005).

### *2.6.3 The Culture Factor*

The act of translation does not take place between words but rather between cultures (Szarkowska, 2005:4). The text is perceived not as an isolated specimen of language but as an integral part of the world (Snell-Hornby, 1998). The process of translation is therefore considered as cross-cultural transfer (Szarkowska, 2005).

It is worth mentioning here that at the turn of the 20th century, the United States started establishing a powerful position among the super powers of this world. Not imitating the traditional pattern of other empires that gained their power by acquiring lands for colonies, the United States became the world's greatest power by focusing on economic and cultural hegemony (Mustafa, 2010). This power has given the United States the ability to affect other cultures by spreading its own values across the whole world and films have been nothing but a significant tool to achieve this aim and to establish standard, ideal or universal values (Mustafa, 2010, Szarkowska, 2005). These values have continued to spread all over the world especially that we are now in the era of globalization in which there is a dominance of the English language and Anglo-American culture over other languages and cultures (Mustafa, 2010, Cronin, 1996).

If as mentioned above, America has and is still imposing its culture on other developed countries, what will happen in the case of Cameroon with 284 local languages and cultures? Currently, Cameroonians watch mostly foreign films (Now: Nigerian, Before: American, British or French). Cameroonians hardly watch their own local films. This is due to the fact that local films had originally had poor quality. Now that the quality is improving, Cameroonians will have to be encouraged again to start watching their own local films. Film is a kind of multimedia, entertainment, sometimes with utterances which are difficult to trace (Chang, 2012). Apart from the fact that film translation is a complicated procedure, it is often open to criticism from everyone with the slightest knowledge of the source language (Gottlieb, 1994). For

instance, the translation of slangs, nicknames and gestures in different cultures.

### *2.6.4 The Ideological Factor*

Eagleton (1991) defines ideology as ideas which help to legitimate a dominant political power. He adds that ideology can be regarded as "identity thinking". Eagleton's definition of ideology can be used to examine its effect on the choice of whether to subtitle or dub a foreign film. America had the aim of becoming the number one power in the world. That is the reason why they used all their power and money to produce films and related products and sell everywhere with the advantage of the English language. The FIGS group had their ideology to keep away any foreign language influence from their countries. That is why they eventually decided to dub their own local products despite the high cost. While smaller poor countries that had no choice, had to choose subtitling which is a cheaper film translation mode. I guess Cameroon being classified as a developing country will definitely have to go for subtitling. By the way what is Cameroon's own ideology?

Other factors proposed by Karamitroglou (1999), supported by Mustafa (2010) that influence the choice of subtitling or dubbing include: the human agents in AVT (i.e. producers, addressers), the products or translated target texts (messages) viewed not only linguistically but from a semiotic perspective as well, the recipients (addressees, consumers), the audiovisual mode (i.e. repertoire mode) that makes audiovisual texts differ from other modes (interpretation, written translation, etc.), the institution (context) or critics, film distributors, film majors, TV channels, etc., the market, video.

### 3. Methodology

The methodology will involve a qualitative look into documents related to film translation; a critical review of some relevant studies carried out in film translation; an evaluation of the various film and cinema translation modes currently in use; a classification of countries by translation modes and a brief history outline of film translation. The various reasons which may encourage certain countries to adopt dubbing or subtitling as a mode of film translation and factors determining the choice of dubbing and subtitling will be highlighted. Reasons for dubbing or subtitling as a better AVT mode for Cameroon will be given. A comparison of the characteristics of dubbing and subtitling

will equally be made. An analysis of all these, will assist in making the best choice of an AVT mode for Cameroon.

#### **4. Findings, Analysis and Discussion**

##### *4.1 Cameroon Film Industry: Dubbing or Subtitling?*

To begin with, it is worth mentioning that it is clearly enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Cameroon, Part I, Article 1(3) that “The official languages of Cameroon shall be English and French”. Mindful of the foregoing, we can rightly say that Cameroon is not a source-language country (like the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Nigeria to a certain extent); the size of its population, and its domestic film production are not significant. Besides, English and French are the two official languages, plus 284 local languages. All these parameters should motivate the authorities that be and those of Communication and Culture institutions specially to adopt subtitling as the major film/TV – screen - translation mode. If nothing is done to adopt a mode of translation in the audiovisual landscape in Cameroon, we might witness media producing programmes in Mandarin, Hindi, Aghem, Bafut, Bulu, Bassa and be powerless to reverse the trend.

This is the age of mass communication, of news reaching people in a matter of hours, of multimedia experiences and a world where audiences demand the right to share the latest text, be it a film, documentary, song, or book simultaneously across cultures (Álvarez, 1996). What could be the impact of the screen (TV/Cinema) in our daily live? The entire contemporary world is inundated with American productions. Cameroon is nowadays swamped with Nigerian films too. By 1890, America had to decide whether or not it would follow the footsteps of other empires and acquire some land for colonies, which at that time was the actual sign of power. The US, however, due to several factors resolved not to imitate the traditional patterns. Instead, it expanded the Monroe Doctrine and became the world’s dominant power by shifting the strategy to cultural and economic hegemony. The so-called American way of life, the free market economy, and democracy became instant symbols of American culture. It is possible through films – among other factors - that American values spread all over the world and began to signify universal, ideal, and standard values. This can be seen as another form of ‘colonisation’.

In contrast and opposition to Hollywood (American cinematography), Nollywood (Nigerian cinematography) and Bollywood (Indian cinematography) have developed and now flourish in their respective territories as well as in other countries. Quite naturally, many people are more likely to choose a film concerning issues familiar to them. While Nollywood does not need to translate its films because they are shot in English and the domestic market is quite large, Bollywood uses subtitling due to the fact that theirs are shot in Hindi, Sanskrit and other national languages.

##### *4.2 Subtitling: the Preferred Mode of Film/TV Documentaries Translation*

The nascent Cameroon film industry should thus focus to conquer the local market first. Therefore, subtitling seems to be the preferred mode of film translation if the industry complies with the State declared official bilingualism. By so doing, it will concur tremendously in the promotion of bilingualism the State officials are trying to encourage. Cameroon is peculiar because French and English, though foreign languages, have been adopted as official languages enjoying the same status. Dubbing is uncalled for because speakers of one language may think they are being ‘domesticated’.

Besides, the official adoption of subtitling as a screen translation mode will help develop a sub-sector of the film industry. At a time that the Government is advocating ‘professionalism’, self-employment and job creation, subtitling could be taught as a specialisation course in Translation schools in the country. As of now, only two institutions of higher learning are teaching subtitling: The Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters (ASTI) in Buea and L’Institut Supérieur de Traduction, Interprétation et de Communication (ISTIC) in Yaounde. Human resources remain the most important asset of a nation and the industry that moulds these human resources is ‘School’. There are now up to five Cameroonians (professional translators) specialised in Subtitling. They are able to train on their own, or in conjunction with a foreign leading subtitling institution based in The Netherlands (Subtitling Worldwide) among others at least 50 professional Subtitlers within a year.

Actually, many people question the effectiveness of the various instructions, orders, and decrees relating to the translation



of documents in English and in French meant for the public. It is an open secret that some State authorities and executives of the private sector, consciously or not, sweep these under the carpet. If these orders were implemented, the demand for trained translators (supposedly custodians of the official linguistic heritage of Cameroon) in the Public and Private sectors will be higher than the offer.

In the case of subtitling, if the Law is effectively implemented and safe guards taken to allow only professionals do their job, trained subtitlers will not rely on the Public Service, but be self-employed or employed by the State owned CRTV, private audiovisual media, or by film companies. Subsequently, Cameroon can become a pole of excellence as concerns Subtitling in Africa. This will definitely be a practical approach to fight against brain drain or better still brain 'exodus' that is hitting the corps of Translators and Interpreters said and known to be the best in Africa. On another score, subtitling could be used to develop and promote our national languages (Ayonghe & Mbele, 2015). There are two types of subtitling: intralingual (same language) subtitling and interlingual subtitling. Intralingual subtitling is generally meant for language learning purposes, for karaoke effect, for dialects of the same language, for the hearing impaired (the deaf and the hard-of-hearing), for notices and announcements. As concerns language learning purposes and easing access to information to the hearing impaired, even source countries (United States of America, United Kingdom), countries of dubbing tradition (France, Italy, etc.) do resort to subtitling of some audiovisual programmes.

In France for instance, TV channels whose audience is equal to or above 25% are required to subtitle some of their programmes (the international French channel France 5, TF1, TV5 Afrique, etc). In the United Kingdom, television has not been immune to these practices (BBC World). The authorities of that country have adopted a Broadcasting Act that specifies that 100% of audiovisual programmes must be subtitled (same language subtitling). The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) has voted a Law in that same connection. In Africa, South Africa has taken the lead. It is worth underscoring the fact that Cameroon is peculiar due to the fact that it has two official languages that are not 'national languages'. Most African countries do have one official language and at least one

national language that is used as a lingua franca (Senegal -Wolof, Kenya and Uganda -Kiswahili, the two Congos -Lingala, etc). So, they broadcast their programmes in both official and national languages without causing any feeling of discrimination among their citizens.

It has been proven that subtitling speeds up language learning: "same language subtitling is used to fight illiteracy: if you show people the written text of what they hear in their own local language, it stimulates them and helps them to overcome their illiteracy." (Kothari *et al.*, 2002). Properly composed subtitles are void of grammatical and spelling mistakes. Else, they can 'unlearn' those who are learning a language. So, subtitling can be used in audiovisual teaching aides designed in national languages. The approach is effective and fruitful in India and many other countries where it is widely used (Kothari *et al.*, 2002; Talaván & Costal, 2017). Same language subtitling in French and in English can also contribute in the promotion of State bilingualism (Ayonghe, 2013). Besides, interlingual subtitling (French-English, English-French) a means for keeping up, possibly even improving the command of languages (Aksu-Ataç & Köprülü-Günay, 2018). Watching and listening to films and programmes subtitled from other languages helps us not only to develop and expand our linguistic skills, but also to contextualise the other language and culture (Al-Dabbagh, 2017). We familiarize ourselves with the other language through the sound track (vocabulary, intonation, pronunciation), and the images bring us into contact with the mannerisms and behaviour of other cultures (Kothari *et al.*, 2002, Aksu-Ataç & Köprülü-Günay, 2018). If our dear country adopts subtitling as the mode of translating films/TV programmes, the policy relating to the promotion of official bilingualism shall not be limited to the classical one-week- event usually organised but stretched to the whole year and be fruitful in the short term.

On quite another score, subtitling documentaries on our culture and tourism in various foreign languages –closed captions- (Spanish, German, Italian, Arabic, Chinese, etc...) and broadcasting them on international television channels (Euronews, CNN, BBC, etc) can attract more tourists and investors in Cameroon. There is no shadow of doubt that money is not the only parameter that determines the choice of translation mode. Dubbing - as a form of

‘domestication’ - is expensive. Subtitling - as a form of ‘foreignisation - (the translated text does not ‘pretend’ to be an original) is cost-effective. The choice of the translating strategy largely depends on the attitude of the target culture vis-à-vis the source culture, and it is not uncommon that political factors determine the chosen audiovisual mode. In Cameroon, French and English enjoy equal status and are instruments used to cement national integration. In the light of the analysis carried out above, subtitling is the most appropriate mode of film/TV documentaries translation in Cameroon. “Gouverner c’est prévoir”.

Table 1 below shows a summary of the characteristics of dubbing and subtitling as modes of film or cinema translation. Thus, one can, by looking at this table, know where to classify a country as well as choose the mode of film translation that best suits a country. Let us for example take the case of Cameroon. It is known as either a poor or a developed country. The population of Cameroon is currently 24, 92 million people (Worldometers, 2018). This figure is nothing when compared with neighbour-country Nigeria with a current population of 197, 83 million (Worldometers, 2018). Thus, Cameroon can be classified as a small country.

Furthermore, table 1 shows that Cameroon has no other choice than to choose subtitling as its film translation mode. First, its population is relatively small, secondly, its languages are too many. This calls for the type of translation that can aid the learning and teaching of as many of these local languages as possible. Finally, the cost of dubbing is too high for the country to adopt that mode of audiovisual translation. This can be explained based on the fact that among the types and number of articles published so far in the country, subtitling comes at the top with the highest numbers of articles published in this domain.

*Table 1: A Compared Presentation of the Characteristics of Dubbing and Subtitling*

	DUBBING	SUBTITLING
<b>Type</b>	Film or Cinema Translation	Film or Cinema Translation
<b>Definition</b>	Dubbing or lip-sync dubbing as a specific technique attempts to cover entirely the spoken source text with a target text adjusted to fit the visual-lip movements of the original utterances.	Subtitling can be defined as the translation of the spoken (or written) source text of a film product into a written target text which is added onto the images of the original product, usually at the bottom of the screen.
<b>Advantages</b>	<p>It does not distract attention from the image. Represents the ideal form of film translation in terms of faithfulness.</p> <p>It is considered better for children who have not yet learnt to read and for people with poor reading skills.</p> <p>It is very expensive as compare to subtitling.</p> <p>Preferred in larger and more affluent countries which can expect high box office receipts.</p> <p>Used by nations whose cultural mission is to preserve and protect their integrity and language in the face of foreign (e.g. American) influence.</p> <p>Used by nations that wished to preserve political stability and power (like Italy, Germany and Spain).</p> <p>Used by countries which have most of the time only one language like English or American languages that are spoken worldwide (no need to translate).</p> <p>Used by countries that can easily cope with globalisation and its requirement in terms of costs and cultural implications.</p>	<p>Most neutral. Involves the least interference with the original. The audience hears the foreign language and gets a feel of its culture.</p> <p>It is used for language learning. Hearing the real voices of the characters facilitates understanding. It is also better for the hard-of-hearing, deaf, immigrants and tourists.</p> <p>It is 10 to 15 times cheaper than dubbing.</p> <p>Preferred in small countries, whose audiences comprise more restricted markets.</p> <p>Used by smaller and poor nations who don't have money to go for dubbing due to its high cost of production.</p> <p>Used by countries forced by unfortunate economic and political circumstances. Some of these countries don't have any other choice than to choose subtitling.</p> <p>Used by countries with many languages like Cameroon with two official languages (English and French) and about 237 local languages. There is, and will always be a greater need for translation.</p> <p>Used by countries that cannot cope with the costs and demands of globalisation.</p>
<b>Disadvantages</b>	<p>It is much more expensive than subtitling and time consuming.</p> <p>It may involve loss of the original soundtrack.</p> <p>Interferes the most in the structure of the original.</p> <p>Lip synchronisation is usually seen as the strongest constraint on accurate translation.</p> <p>Non-verbal information e.g. notices, road signs, etc., are not usually mentioned in dubbed films.</p> <p>Compatibility of the dubber's voice with the one on the original soundtrack sometimes causes a problem.</p>	<p>It is 10-15 times cheaper than dubbing.</p> <p>It involves significant cuts. There is greater loss of information.</p> <p>Involves the least interference with the original.</p> <p>Attention of audience is split between soundtrack, image and subtitles.</p> <p>Meanwhile subtitling can be used to explain these notices, signs, etc. in films.</p> <p>There are limitations in space and duration.</p>

Compiled by Ayonghe (2018) from study documentation.

### 5. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to demonstrate through the dubbing and subtitling modes, how powerful and important film translation was in Cameroon. This was done, together with an evaluation of these modes. At the end of the study, it was revealed that subtitling was the appropriate choice for the country. This study was carried out in order to draw special attention of all AVT researchers and students in Cameroon, the government itself, including all stake holders, who are interested in the growth of the country educationally, culturally, socio-economically and politically.

We therefore join Aksu-Ataç and Köprülü-Günay (2018), Talaván and Costal (2017), Mustafa (2010), Szarkowska (2005) and Danan (1991) to emphasize that Cameroon should choose subtitling as film/cinema translation mode since an evaluation of the state of the country in relation to audiovisual translation puts it in that category. Furthermore, the various benefits resulting from the use of subtitling have been presented and explained in detail above.

From the foregoing, we believe that the State authorities shall take the measures they deem necessary to promote our film industry and adopt through related instruments the translation mode proper to the film industry and the media landscape in Cameroon while considering the social and political context.

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