
**THE PLACE OF INTERPRETING IN
PEACEKEEPERS' TRAINING
A CASE STUDY OF AMISOM**

BY

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DECLARATION

This is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to:

My parents Isidore and Frédérique Kabwa

For having, through the years, exemplified the love of knowledge and encouraged a healthy sense of curiosity and the pursuit of excellence

My loving husband, Nicholas Shalita

For your patience and wholehearted, unwavering support through this degree

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May the Good Lord reveal to you, in your youth, the profession that brings you Joy and Fulfillment and open ways for you to pursue it successfully as you glorify His Name.

ABSTRACT

This study assessed the need for and impact of interpreting in training of AU peacekeepers in the context of capacity building provided to the AU mission in Somalia by the UN through UNSOA. The stated research problem is based on the observation that UNSOA training activities constitute a multicultural encounter relying on English as a language of communication which is not necessarily the peacekeepers' primary language.

The research objectives pursued were therefore (1) to investigate the impact of the language gap on the realisation of the training objectives, (2) to determine the effectiveness of the measures adopted by UNSOA to bridge the language gap during its training activities, and (3) to establish if the availability of in-house language services -specifically interpreting services- would significantly improve the achievement of UNSOA TS objectives.

The study collected data through evaluation forms completed by trainees at the end of pre-deployment training activities and UN logistics course, training reports produced at the end of each training by the training coordinators and a SurveyMonkey questionnaire used to collect the views of six main trainers and training coordinators. The data was analysed through the lenses of the intercultural communication conceptual framework and using statistical tools.

The key findings of the research are (1) both trainees and trainers opined that interpreting plays a key role in the training activities as it effectively bridges the language gap, ensures effective communication and interactions between trainees and trainers, (2) the services of an in-house interpreter/translator are key to effective training and capacity building activities for the benefit of AMISOM and (3) these services need to be made available on a permanent basis to ensure continued success of training activities in AMISOM; a multicultural mission.

The major conclusion of the study is that despite the fact that UNSOA TS, the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) from other sections, trainers and trainees recognised the need for a permanent in-house

interpreter/translator, the delay in the recruitment process frustrated the continuity of these services and affected the efficiency of the training activities.

It is therefore recommended that UNSOA management supports the efforts of UNSOA TS to recruit on a continuous –possibly a permanent – basis a qualified language professional who can not only provide translation and interpretation services but also supervise a team of language specialists providing additional support for various language combinations as needed.

ABBREVIATIONS

AMISOM - African Union Mission in Somalia

AU - African Union

AUPSC - African Union Peace and Security Council

CITS – Communication and Information Technology Services

EU – European Union

HRDDP - Human Rights Due Diligence Policy

ICRC - International Committee of the Red Cross

IPSTC – International Peace Support Training Center

MTST - Mobile Training Support Team

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

PCC - Police contributing Country

PDT - Pre-deployment Training

SME – Subject Matter Experts

ToT – Training of Trainers

TCC - Troop contributing Country

TFG – Transitional Federal Government

TS – Training Section

UN - United Nations

UNLOG – United Nations Logistics Course for AMISOM

UNSC - United Nations Security Council

UNSCR - United Nations Security Council Resolution

UNSOA - United Nations Support Office for AMISOM

UNSOM - United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Located in the Horn of Africa (see map in Annex 1), Somalia is a unique country on the African continent in that it has a fairly homogeneous population that is united by ancestral roots (same tribe but different clans and sub-clans), the same religion (the population is largely Muslim Sunni), same cultural practices and language (Somali). Despite this homogeneity, the country has been plagued by recurrent conflicts since 1991 when President Siad Barre was deposed. These conflicts are caused by complex and interrelated social, political and economic factors that have led to structural violence in Somalia over the last two decades. During that time; a variety of Islamic movements emerged seeking to establish an Islamic state in Somalia. One of these movements is Al-Shabaab (the youth in Arabic); a militant Islamist group that controls significant parts of southern Somalia where it imposes a strict form of Sharia law and which was behind the piracy activities in the Indian Ocean a few years ago. Today, Al-Shabaab is considered a terrorist group by most countries.

Over the years, several internal and external efforts (UN intervention in 1993, Transitional Federal Government -TFG- in 2004, IGASOM: IGAD Peace Support Mission in Somalia in 2005), have been expounded to stabilize Somalia - widely characterized as a failed state- and alleviate the suffering of its population but had little to no impact on resolving the conflict. Faced with the so-called “Africa fatigue” by western countries that prompted them to halt their involvement in peace initiatives on the continent and armed with its newly created and institutionalized peacekeeping and peace enforcement mechanism, the African Union (AU), at the behest of the continent’s leaders seeking “African solutions to African problems”, established the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) on 19 January 2007 which was approved by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on 21 February 2007.

In 2007; AMISOM deployed its troops in Somalia under a peacekeeping mandate that tasked its initial 8,000 troops with supporting the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG), enabling the provision of humanitarian assistance, and creating conditions conducive to long-term stabilisation, reconstruction and development. The lack of material resources, sufficient troop numbers, limited or no experience in planning and managing peacekeeping operations both at the AU (Addis Ababa) and mission headquarters (Mogadishu) levels, an increasingly hostile environment that inflicted heavy casualties on AMISOM, the AU and the UN revised AMISOM's mandate from peacekeeping (protecting TFG from armed groups) to peace enforcement (engaging Al-Shabaab and any other armed groups wherever they are) and a logistical support package was established to support AMISOM's operations in Somalia through the United Nations Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA) in 2009 by the UNSC Resolution 1863. This support is provided by various partners through UNSOA to all Troop Contributing Countries (TCC), namely Uganda (since March 2007), Burundi (since December 2007), Djibouti (since December 2011), Kenya (since February 2012), Sierra Leone (from April 2012 to December 2014) and Ethiopia (since January 2014).

AMISOM is significant in that it is the first partnership between the AU and the UN that establishes a collaboration in which AU provides a fighting military force receiving logistical support from the UN. It is also significant because it is the first attempt to restore peace and security in Somalia that has made significant advances against Al-Shabaab and made remarkable progress in creating a secure environment in parts of Somalia that allows the peace-building and peace consolidation processes to begin and humanitarian assistance to be provided to Somalis in Somalia.

Furthermore, the diversity in TCC within AMISOM creates a multicultural forum in which complex operational and political discussions must take place in the absence of a true *lingua franca* shared by all TCC. Indeed the TCC's national languages are Luganda, Kirundi, Somali, Swahili and Amharic. While troops are supposed to be fluent in their second languages (French in the case of Burundi and Djibouti and English in the case of Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Sierra Leone), this is not always the

case. This hinders communication between troops within AMISOM and between troops and various stakeholders including UNSOA.

The UN Security Council (henceforth UNSC) Resolution 1863 (January 2009) established and mandated UNSOA to provide a logistical support package to AMISOM to enable the African Mission to pursue its mission to bring back peace in Somalia. The logistical support package includes vital life support such as food, water, health and sanitation, and fuel; facilities and engineering; vehicles and other equipment; communications and IT; information support operations; property management; capacity building (*emphasis added*); aviation and medical services.

Hence, one of the central aspects of UNSOA mandate is capacity building for AMISOM personnel. That task is carried out by UNSOA Training Section; the section within UNSOA primarily responsible for providing various training activities to AMISOM troops. These activities include pre-deployment training (PDT) which is a compulsory training for all the peacekeeping forces receiving any support (technical, material, financial, logistical etc...) from the UN - including AMISOM - to ensure that UN standards are understood by all peacekeepers who must adhere to them. This training encompasses subjects such as Humanitarian Law, Human Rights, Zero Tolerance on sexual abuse and exploitation, Conduct & Discipline. Other training activities such as Logistics training, ICT training, Movement Control (MOVCON) training, Aviation training are also carried out or organised by the Training Section in collaboration with other sections.

Given that training is an “organized activity aimed at imparting information and/or instructions to improve the recipient's performance or to help him or her attain a required level of knowledge or skill”¹, it requires effective communication between the trainers and the trainees to achieve the training objectives. It is therefore important to ensure that language barriers are removed to guarantee effective communication during training activities.

¹- <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/training.html#ixzz3b9HTrkz9>

This is where interpreting comes in. Interpreting is the act of rendering oral language spoken in one language (source language; henceforth SL) into another (target language; henceforth TL) for the benefit of listeners who do not understand –or who understand imperfectly – the SL². Professional interpreting requires that the interpreter possesses a good command of the SL, an excellent command of the TL, deep insight into the subject matter, a wide general knowledge and mastery of the correct methodology needed to carry out the interpreting process. With these attributes, the interpreter renders the message of the speaker from the SL into the TL as if it was spoken in the TL in the first instance. A number of scholars involved in the project “Languages at war” that studied various aspects of language services in different conflicts (world wars I and II, Korean War, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Northern Ireland, Iraq and Afghanistan) have recognised that armies involved in these conflicts “were seldom solely monolingual (...) and languages proved vital to operational effectiveness, to communication on the ground, to mediation and to peace-building, an integral part of the whole economy of war” (Footitt & Kelly, 2012)(p.12, *emphasis added*).

This research is in that tradition and explores the place of professional simultaneous interpreting during UNSOA training activities of AMISOM personnel.

² Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 3rd Edition

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As stated in 1.1, almost all training activities offered by UNSOA to AMISOM personnel are carried out in English whereas the trainees' fluency in English is limited at best, and non-existent in some cases; particularly for trainees from Ethiopia, Djibouti and Burundi.

There have been studies on interpreting in conflict situations [cf. (Baigorri-Jalon, 2010), (Baker, When Bosnia was a Commonwealth country: British forces and their interpreters in Republika Srpska 1995–2007, 2012), (Snellman, 2014)] most of which have been included in the “Languages at war” project (Footitt & Kelly; 2012) that studied policies and practices of language contacts in conflicts. Generally, these studies have addressed issues such as the role of military interpreters in crisis operations, in negotiations with host country populations, the treatment of locally recruited interpreters during the NATO peacekeeping mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina; the recruitment, use and training of language assistants for negotiation, mediation and humanitarian assistance.

However, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, none of the studies have addressed the peculiarity of training peacekeepers in an African multinational peacekeeping mission with wide variations in its language landscape (Amharic, Kirundi, Luganda, Somali, Swahili, English and French) without the support of a language services unit.

Some of the questions arising from this research gap include:

- i. Does UNSOA internal training evaluation recognise the language gap as a problem or an impediment to the realisation of training objectives?
- ii. How has UNSOA managed to bridge the language gap in its training activities with no permanent staff responsible for interpreting and translation?
- iii. How effective have the adopted solutions been in addressing the language gaps, establishing effective communication between trainees and trainers, realising the training objectives?
- iv. To what extent does the success of such training activities depend on professional interpreting?

1.3 Research Objectives

This study seeks to fill this research gap by:

- i. Investigating the impact of the language gap on the realisation of the training objectives
- ii. Determining the effectiveness of the measures adopted by UNSOA to bridge the language gap during its training activities
- iii. Establishing if the availability of in-house language services -specifically interpreting services- would significantly improve the achievement of UNSOA TS objectives.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

This study will test the following hypothesis:

- i. The realisation of the training objectives was hindered by the language gap.
- ii. The measures adopted by UNSOA have made some differences but have not fundamentally addressed the issue.
- iii. The availability of in-house language services would solve the issue of ineffective communication during training due to language barriers.

1.5 Rationale

While a number of publications on interpreting in NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) peacekeeping missions (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iraq, Afghanistan...) are available, there is hardly any publication or available information on interpreting in peacekeeping missions on the African continent; particularly on interpreting in hybrid AU-UN peacekeeping missions. It is hoped that this project will contribute to filling this knowledge gap. This is particularly relevant because of the changing nature of peacekeeping which, increasingly, is modelling a partnership between troops on the ground provided by countries with large armies and limited material means receiving logistical support from the UN, EU or the US.

The outcome of this study will also provide lessons learnt that can be incorporated and built into the planning of future peacekeeping; AU-UN hybrid peacekeeping missions in particular.

Finally, given that interpreting is central to effective communication and effective communication is essential - even central - to success in peacekeeping and peace-building, the resulting body of knowledge will contribute to the improvement of factors affecting interpreting (and therefore communication) in AU-UN peacekeeping missions.

1.6 Scope and Limitations

The general theme of this study will be interpreting in peacekeeping missions operating on the African continent. However, due to time constraints and limited access to other missions, this study has a narrower scope focusing on the peacekeeping mission in Somalia and more specifically on interpreting during UNSOA training activities provided to AMISOM troops.

Since the training mandate for the peacekeepers in Somalia has been entrusted to UNSOA by UNSC Resolution 1863, more specifically to the Training Section within UNSOA³, this project will focus on interpreting provided in support of the training activities carried out by this section. Translation will be touched on as it goes in pair with interpreting in the UNSOA TS.

1.7 Literature Review

The literature reviewed in this study is categorized as follows:

³"The Security Council, in its resolution 1863 on 16 January 2009, authorized the United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia (UNSOA) to provide a logistical support package to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to enable it to conduct peacekeeping operations in Somalia. As part of this logistical support package, UNSOA is responsible for developing, delivering, and assessing a training programme regarding AMISOM management of logistics and operations. UNSOA has a Training Unit of four staff that is responsible for administering UNSOA's training mandate. The respective sections of UNSOA are primarily responsible for planning and implementing this mandate" (USUN, 2011). (2011 Audit Report on UNSOA Training Program, USUN)

1.7.1 Literature on History and Culture of Somalia

Lewis (2009) addresses salient aspects of the history and culture of Somali people and paints the evolution of the Somali political region since the collapse of the Republic in 199. (Lewis, 2009). This helped the researcher understand the conflict that led to the establishment of the peacekeeping mission under study.

1.7.2 Literature on UN and AU Peace Operations

Ramsbotham (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, & Miall, 2011) provides an overview of contemporary conflict resolution and contributed to the researcher's understanding of various approaches to conflict resolution and a better understanding of the conflict resolution in the Somali context.

The Nordic Africa Institute (The Nordic Africa Institute, 2012) contextualizes various support models for African Peace Operations and discusses the experiences of UN support models for AU Peace-Support Operations in various missions including AMISOM. It provided useful background and assessment of challenges encountered by the practitioners in their own words.

Nduwimana (Nduwimana, 2013) discusses the challenges and successes of AMISOM in Somalia.

The DPKO training manual for UN Peacekeeping PDT standards (2009) gives guidelines on how to effectively work with language assistants in the field and highlights the challenges likely to arise. It provided a good background knowledge for the researcher particularly in relation to the evaluation of effectiveness of measures in place to bridge the language gap. (<http://un.org> read on March 10, 2015). (DPKO, 2009)

1.7.3 Literature on Language Issues in Conflict Situations

Baker (Baker, <http://academia.edu/> interpreting the peace: peace operations, conflict and languages in Bosnia Herzegovina, read on May 1st, 2015) explores challenges encountered by interpreters

during the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict and provides a useful background on challenges in interpreting in conflict areas.

Footitt and Kelly (Footitt & Kelly, 2012) explores the practices of language contacts in conflict situations. This provided insight on the impact of interpreting in other peace operations.

Businaro (Businaro, read on 10 March 2015) discusses the language barriers across relief operations and focuses on the interpreter factor. Though this research study is specific to humanitarian work in conflict areas, it is useful in exploring solutions that may be adapted to the peacekeeping missions since working conditions and challenges are similar as humanitarian organizations are also called to work in areas where conflict and war are strife. (<http://academia.edu/relief> operations across language barriers: the interpreter factor 10 March, 2015).

Moser-Mercer (Moser-Mercer, 2015) in interpreting in zones of crisis and war, explains the needs assessment for multilingual communication in conflict areas. This provided useful information for this research.

1.7.4 Literature on Interpreting

Gillies (Gillies, 2013) explains conference interpreting and is useful for defining professional interpreting and providing performance evaluation benchmarks.

Seleskovitch (Seleskovitch, 2002) provides useful information on effective training of interpreters. This information was useful in understanding how interpreting relates to effective communication.

1.7.5 Literature on Intercultural Communication

Jandt (Jandt, 2001) discusses Intercultural Communication in a Global Community; thus providing a basis for the conceptual framework used in this study.

Mathur (Mathur, 2001) in discussing the agenda for intercultural communication for developing countries explores the role of linguistic behaviour in intercultural communication; provided the researcher with a useful conceptual basis for data analysis

Fischer and Merrill (Fischer and Merrill, 1976) constitutes one of the earliest research studies in the field of intercultural communication and provide a good basis for a common understanding and global definitions of theories and key terms in this field.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is no theory that directly addresses the concerns of this study. It was, therefore, guided by the conceptual framework of intercultural communication as defined and explained in various publications, including Jandt (2001; 2004), Mathur (2001), and Fischer and Merrill (1976).

This study shares the line of thinking stated in Mathur (2001:3) as follows:

“The need is for promoting intercultural communication within and amongst multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-lingual developing countries and for studying the role that language... play therein.” (*underlining added.*)

In general, language is treated as one of the possible barriers to inter-cultural communication. Thus, Jandt (2001:68) says:

“There are six barriers to communication – anxiety, assuming similarities instead of differences, ethno-centricism, stereotypes and prejudice, non-verbals, and language problems. (*underlining added*)

Fischer and Merrill (1976:409) state that:

"intercultural communication is communication between human beings of different cultures" and proceed to define it as "...the process of the exchange of thoughts and meaning between people of differing cultures...."

They further explain that:

“Intercultural communication takes place today in almost every sector of human activity. The most important of these would seem to be (1) Politics, (2) Science, (3) Art and Culture, (4) Economics, (5) Journalism, (6) Tourism, (7) Technics, (8) Church and Charity affairs, (9) Sport, (10) the Military Sector, (11) Institutions, Organizations etc., (12) the Personal, Private Sector. (p. 411, *underlining added.*)”

This study is about intercultural communication in the military sector, in circumstances where language is the most significant symbol of one’s culture. Emphasizing this role of language in culture, Jandt (2001:126) defines language and makes the following remarks:

“One definition of language is that it is a set of symbols shared by a community to communicate meaning and experience. The symbols maybe sounds or gestures...Language, then, has a direct relationship to culture. Language bonds a people together and reflects what those people saw, ate, and thought (*underlining added.*)”

Bridging such cultural boundaries/gaps requires the services of a professional who has mastered the different languages involved in an inter-cultural exchange. As Jandt (2001:145) points out:

“...if a person learns another language or grows up speaking more than one language, the person may become aware of the different ways that each language allows a speaker to perceive and describe reality....”

This is echoed by the President of AIIC, Benoit Kremer, who maintains that:

“Only professional interpreters can help overcome language barriers and contribute to smooth international and intercultural communication. Interpretation is never about word-for-word translation; it is about grasping the meaning and conveying it, respecting the grammatical, stylistic, linguistic features of the target language and the cultural references of the audience”, AIIC President quoted in Financial Times, February 5, 2010⁴.

It is this capacity that makes interpreting services critical in inter-cultural communication.

⁴<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/65086720-11f5-11df-b6e3-00144feab49a.html#axzz3pCnbBAwa>

In this study, inter-cultural communication, as a conceptual framework, gives us the necessary insight into inter-cultural encounters in terms of what communication strategies may be necessary, what may go wrong, and why it may go wrong. Similarly, it gives us insight into the arrangements that work and why they do work.

1.9 Methodology

1.9.1 Required Data

The data required for this study includes the following:

- i. Trainees' opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the training activities.
- ii. Trainees' judgement on the need to provide training activities in a language they are familiar with.
- iii. Trainers' judgement on the impact of interpreting on training activities and trainees' involvement.

1.9.2 Data Collection

The data collection techniques used in this study are as follows:

- i. Secondary data is used to collect trainees' opinions and judgements. These include existing training evaluation forms that are completed by AMISOM trainees at the end of each training activity. A representative sample size was drawn from the existing stock by random sampling.
- ii. Views of trainers and training coordinators on the importance of interpreting during these activities were collected from the training reports issued at the end of these activities.
- iii. An online questionnaire (using SurveyMonkey tool) was sent out to six trainers and training officers responsible for various training activities to collect their views on the relevance of interpreting during these activities.

1.9.3 Data Presentation and Analysis

The collected data was organised according to the issue that it addresses and where necessary analysed using elementary statistical techniques.

A quantitative analysis was also be done to establish a trend in thought.

1.10 Summary

This chapter serves as an introduction to the study. It provides a background to the study by situating the AU peacekeeping mission in the Somali context and the training support provided by the UN to that mission. The research problem is stated based on the observation that training activities constitute a multicultural encounter relying on English as a language of communication which is not necessarily the peacekeepers' primary language. In light of this, the study aims to assess the need for and impact of interpreting in these training activities. This chapter also summarises the literature review, sets out the scope and limitations of this study and discusses the conceptual framework used in the study and concludes with an explanation of the methodology used in the data collection which relies on trainees' evaluation forms and a SurveyMonkey questionnaire used to collect the trainers' views.

CHAPTER TWO

AN OVERVIEW OF TRAINING CHALLENGES, INTERVENTIONS AND FEEDBACK FROM TRAINEES

2.1 Introduction of UNSOA Training Activities

As indicated in 1.1, the United Nations (UN henceforth) through its Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1863 entrusted UNSOA with the mandate to provide support in capacity building to AMISOM Troops Contributing Countries (TCC) through various training activities such as: pre-deployment training (PDT), UN Logistics Course (UNLOG), Aviation training, movement control (MOVCON) training, catering training, medical training only to name a few.

The objective of PDT and UNLOG training activities is to impart the AMISOM personnel with sufficient knowledge and expertise in a given area of expertise with a view to enhance the operational effectiveness of AMISOM personnel in Somalia but also to ensure that AMISOM contingents deploy with personnel who have a basic understanding of UN mandatory cross-cutting issues -such Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), gender, HIV/AIDS, conduct & discipline, human rights, child protection and relevant international and UN regulations and policies- required for all peacekeepers receiving any form of support from the UN (see HRDDP⁵) in order to ensure their respect of Human Rights, Humanitarian Law and Refugee Law as they fulfil their mandate in a manner that upholds the image and credibility of the mission while gaining the hearts and minds of the Somali population.

Within UNSOA, the Training Section assumes the responsibility to train AMISOM personnel by coordinating all training activities in collaboration with the relevant sections.

⁵"In early 2013, the United Nations (UN) Secretary General has formulated a UN Human Rights Due Diligence Policy, which has already been taken up by the Security Council in the context of mandates for UN peacekeeping forces. The new policy aims at preventing UN support to state and non-state actors alike used for the commission of grave violations of international humanitarian law, human rights and refugee law".
(<http://jcsf.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2014/06/24/jcsf.kru011.abstract>)

2.2 Training Section at UNSOA

The training section at UNSOA comprises 7 staff members (as of August 2015) that are directly involved in training either as trainers or training coordinators and a couple of support staff. Training is provided in collaboration with other sections from UNSOA and UNSOM (United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Somalia) whose staff, as subject matter experts (henceforth SMEs) provide briefings or training in specialised fields such as: UNSOA and AMISOM Mandates (by SME from Political Affairs Section), Conduct and Discipline and the UN Zero Tolerance Policy on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights (by SME from the Legal Section), Engineering, Aviation and Medical support, etc.

99% of the SMEs are English speaking and they prepare and deliver their training material (Powerpoint and/or films) in English.

Between April 2012 and December 2014, the training section hired a consultant to be the focal point for translation and interpreting services. The consultant was also the in-house translator and interpreter for English to French and French to English translation and interpreting services.

In addition, the consultant successfully proposed that the section acquires their own simultaneous interpreting equipment and setup a process for recruiting external interpreters and translators for other languages or to support multiple training requests.

2.3 Overview of the Training Activities analysed in this Study

This study focuses on two (2) training activities; selected based on the fact that they benefitted the most from the language services support available in UNSOA between 2012 and 2014. These training activities are the pre-deployment training (PDT) and the UN logistics course (UNLOG).

The training methodology used for both activities is a combination of short lectures (45 minutes followed by a Q&A session of 10 to 15 minutes) with visuals: powerpoint presentations and films, and group work in the case of UNLOG.

2.3.1 The UN Mandatory Pre-deployment Training Activity

As part of the UN logistical support package for AMISOM, UNSOA has since November 2011 provided on-site PDT support to AMISOM Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) on AU-UN mandatory cross-cutting issues and topics. The PDT support programme was initiated by UNSOA due to the lack of basic understanding by AMISOM TCCs of AU-UN mandatory cross-cutting issues and topics as most TCCs were participating in a peacekeeping mission for the first time.

The programme, which is targeted at Contingent Commanders/Key Appointment Holders, involves the deployment of a Mobile Training Support Team (MTST) consisting of AU-UN Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to provide on-site PDT support prior to the deployment of the contingents.

UNSOA's on-site PDT support, though a deviation of the usual practice in the UN peacekeeping missions, was unavoidable due to the unfavourable security situation in Somalia where mandatory induction training would otherwise take place. Providing mandatory induction training to AMISOM contingents would have made it extremely difficult for UNSOA to monitor the compliance of the HRDDP.

The UN mandatory pre-deployment training (PDT) is a 5-day training offered to officers prior to their deployment into the mission area while they are still in their country of origin. This is a type of training

of trainers (ToT) and the trained officers have the responsibility to train the troops under their command. This training activity aims to:

- provide AMISOM personnel with a basic understanding of the UN logistics support arrangements
- Sensitize AMISOM personnel on sensitive issues such as Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), Gender, HIV/AIDS, conduct & discipline, Human Rights, Humanitarian Law, child protection, relevant international and UN regulations and policies and
- Brief AMISOM personnel on other mission-specific topics such as the Somali culture and the Dos and Don'ts in the host country.

2.3.2 The UN Logistics Course for AMISOM

The UN Logistics Course for AMISOM is a 10-day course aimed at providing participants with the knowledge and skills they need to improve their effectiveness in complex peace operations. The training is a combination of presentations on various logistics concepts interspersed with real life scenarios focusing on planning, coordination and conduct of logistics in Peace Support Operations that the participants solve in their group work as they apply the newly learnt logistics concepts.

The UN logistics Course (UNLOG) is offered to officers responsible for logistics tasks in the mission area. This training is intended to impart skills that are to be implemented in the day to day activities of the officers and has a huge impact on the effectiveness of the contingent as it affects their rations, fuel supply and other aspects of logistical support that AMISOM soldiers receive from UNSOA.

UNLOG involves trainees from all TCC and takes place at the International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC) in Karen, Nairobi, Kenya.

At the end of the UNLOG course, the participants are expected to:

- Understand the context within which UN Logistics planning processes occur.
- Understand the fundamental principles of Logistic planning,

- Be able to participate in any national or multinational logistics planning process
- Gain logistical knowledge and skills specific to AMISOM.

Officers who participate in these activities are also expected to share their newly acquired knowledge with men under their command. This presupposes that not only have they understood the training; but that they have also taken note of key points and ideally taken notes that they will use as they guide officers under their command through the logistics tasks they are supposed to carry out.

2.3.3 Data collected from the sampled training activities

As discussed in 1.9, data used in this research is collected from the training evaluation forms completed by the trainees at the end of every training activity. A sample of the evaluation form (EVALFORM henceforth) used is found in Annex 2.

Trainees' views on specific aspects of the training were collected using an ordinal scale in which trainees were asked to rate the veracity of a statement on the evaluation form (statements 1 to 9 on the EVALFORM for the purpose of this study) by choosing 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree) and 5 (strongly agree).

For ease of presentation and clear analysis, categories 1 and 2 were merged into "Disagree", category 3 remained "Neutral" and categories 4 and 5 were merged into "Agree" thus reducing the categories in this study to 3, namely: "Disagree", "Neutral" and "Agree"

In order to evaluate the impact of interpreting on the training activity, the following sections were considered:

- Section 5 under the heading "Translation and Interpretation"
- Section 6 under the heading "General Appreciation", and
- Suggestions/ comments provided by the trainees in the space provided at the bottom of the training evaluation forms.

- Feedback from the trainers and the training coordinators found in the final training report for each activity.

The collected data was analysed in line with the specified objectives and using the conceptual framework.

This study used stratified random sampling in collecting data from the following periods:

- 2011-2012: When no interpretation was provided.
- 2012-2014: When interpretation was provided

The study focuses on the training activities involving troop contributing countries that do not have English as one of their official languages, i.e. Djibouti, Burundi. Ethiopia will not be included in this study because the researcher does not read nor understand Amharic and is therefore not in a position to read nor interpret data or comments written in Amharic.

The specific activities were randomly selected.

The PDT sample (224 trainees) represents:

- 100% of the training offered in Djibouti (only one has been carried out to date)
- 30% of the PDT activities offered in Burundi, partly because of the availability of data in early 2012-2013 (some of the evaluation forms were not systematically filed as they were in mid-2013 and 2014) and also because 152 officers (representing 20% of the total number of trainees) were trained in a space of 2.5 months (April 2014 to June 2014) in back to back training sessions; using data from this concentrated group of trainees might give a skewed picture in this study. Instead, PDT activities were randomly chosen from the available set of data to cover a variety of training periods in order to effectively evaluate the impact of interpreting services on these activities over time.

The sample for the UN Logistics training for AMISOM officers (223 trainees) on the other hand, represents 75% of the trainees as data was more readily available and had been systematically filed,

labelled and easy to access. The researcher collected the evaluation, comments and observations from all the trainees in attendance in a given training activity.

Responses from 224 participants in 6 PDT activities and 223 participants in 7 UNLOG activities were analysed.

Where available, the final report was studied to extract trainers' and training coordinators' observations relative to the impact of interpreting - or lack thereof- on the effectiveness of the training activity.

In addition, primary data was gathered through a questionnaire that was distributed to 5 trainers who evaluated the interpretation services and their impact on the effectiveness of the training activities. A sample of the questionnaire used is in Annex 4.

The findings are tabulated below, highlighting the challenges, the interventions and the feedback from each activity.

2.3.4 Presentation of the challenges, the interventions and trainees' feedback

The raw data is hereunder presented in a table format comprising a description of the training activities under study, the challenges that were encountered during each activity, the interventions brought about to ensure effective communication in each intercultural encounter and the feedback from trainees and trainers (where available).

PDT- November 2011	
Description	On November 23 rd , 2011, the first PDT was conducted by UNSOA in Burundi. Professional interpreting services were not provided and training materials were in English.
Challenges	During the 2-day training, it became evident that the trainees were not fluent in English and that a lot of the training was not understood.
Interventions	The training coordinator requested a member of the Burundian army to assist the trainers by summarising their presentations in a few words in order to ensure that the trainees get the main message of the training. This was a sort of improvised consecutive interpreting ⁶ ; an ad hoc solution. The officer doing the consecutive interpreting was not a trained interpreter but a training coordinator with the Burundian army whose understanding and mastery of the English language was better than most of the officers on the course.
Feedback	<p>✚ Trainees' feedback at the end of this training is summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 30% of the trainees requested for interpreting services ▪ 23% of the trainees requested for training materials written in French and/or Kirundi ▪ 70% of the trainees observed that the time allocated to the training was too little to understand the training fully. ▪ 55% of the trainees did not find the training handouts/materials useful ▪ 75% of them were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired ▪ 70% felt that the training goals were met ▪ 88% indicated that they will share the acquired knowledge ▪ 100% of the trainees' feedback was written in either French or Kirundi <p>✚ Trainers' and training coordinator's feedback was formulated as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>“November 2011 marked the first PDT conducted by UNSOA. The main challenge experienced during the training was the language barrier especially in Burundi where French is the first language; but given that most of the soldiers do not master it, (consecutive) interpreting had to be done (improvised) into their mother tongue Kirundi.⁷”</i> ▪ <i>It is recommended that: 1) the training presentations be translated into French so that French speaking participants can follow and understand the training better. 2) more time is required also when dealing with Burundi because of consecutive interpreting.⁸”</i>

⁶Consecutive interpreting is “Interpreting after the speaker has finished. The interpreter sits with the delegates, listens to the speech and renders it, at the end, in a different language, generally with the aid of notes. In the modern world, consecutive interpreting has been largely replaced by simultaneous, but it remains relevant for certain kinds of meetings (e.g. highly technical meetings, working lunches, small groups, field trips). Well-trained interpreters can render speeches of 10 minutes or more with great accuracy”.

(http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/scic/what-is-conference-interpreting/consecutive/index_en.htm - read on 10/03/2015)

⁷UN Mandatory Evaluation Report November 2011- January 2012

⁸UN Mandatory Evaluation Report November 2011- January 2012

PDT- April 2012	
Description	On April 20 th , 2012 the pre-deployment training activity conducted in Burundi was, for the first time, done with the support of simultaneous interpreting services in French and Kirundi. And some of the training materials had been translated into French.
Challenges	Some of the training materials were not translated into French nor Kirundi.
Interventions	Simultaneous interpreting was relied on to counter the lack of training material in English and bridge the language gap during the presentations. The interpreters who serviced this training were experienced freelance interpreters including the in-house interpreter.
Feedback	<p>✚ Trainees' feedback is summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 97% of the trainees welcomed the use of interpreting services and said that the latter improved their understanding of the training ▪ 92% of the trainees confirmed that the availability of training materials in French improved their understanding of various subject matters ▪ 33% insisted that the training materials that were not yet available in French should be translated expeditiously ▪ 97% of the trainees said that the availability of interpreting services in French and Kirundi encouraged their participation and their engagement with the trainers. ▪ 100% of them were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired ▪ 100% felt that the training goals were met ▪ 100% indicated that they will share the acquired knowledge ▪ 95% of the trainees' feedback was written in either French or Kirundi. <p>✚ Trainers' and training coordinator's feedback was formulated as follows: <i>“The April training conducted in Bujumbura was the first time UNSOA used a translator/interpreter who managed to translate the training materials in French and also interpret from English to French/Kirundi. The Burundian trainees were very excited about the training as they could understand it in their mother tongue and were able to ask questions in Kirundi or French which were in turn interpreted into English by the interpreter and the facilitators were able to respond to them. The trainers felt that the training in Bujumbura has considerably improved with the simultaneous interpretation in Kirundi and in French.”</i>⁹</p>

Table 2: PDT April 2012

⁹UN Mandatory Evaluation Report April 2012

PDT- September 2012	
Description	In September 2012, a PDT activity was conducted in Burundi with the support of simultaneous interpreting services in French and Kirundi.
Challenges	Most - but not all- training materials had been translated into French and updated. Some presentations were only available in English.
Interventions	Simultaneous interpreting was provided by experienced freelance interpreters. The in-house interpreter was part of the interpreting team and had translated the training material and the feedback from previous training activities.
Feedback	<p>✚ Trainees' feedback is summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 95% of the trainees welcomed the use of interpreting services and said that the latter improved their understanding of the training ▪ 98% of the trainees confirmed that the availability of training materials in French improved their understanding of various subject matters ▪ 98% of the trainees said that the availability of interpreting services encouraged their participation and their engagement with the trainers. ▪ 98% recommended translation and interpretation services for future training ▪ 100% of them were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired ▪ 100% felt that the training goals were met ▪ 100% indicated that they will share the acquired knowledge ▪ 90% of the trainees wrote their additional comments and suggestions in either French or Kirundi as opposed to 3% English. 8% had no additional comments.

Table 3: PDT September 2012

PDT- October 2013	
Description	In October 2013, a PDT activity was conducted in Burundi with the support of simultaneous interpreting services in French and Kirundi. One of the locally recruited interpreter did not have much experience in interpreting for peacekeeping training but had the required language combination and experience in other subject matters.
Challenges	Most training materials were translated into French.
Interventions	Simultaneous interpreting was relied on to counter the lack of training material in English. The interpreters who serviced this training comprised an interpreter with no experience in peacekeeping subjects.
Feedback	<p>✚ Trainees' feedback is summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 87% of the trainees welcomed the use of interpreting services and said that the latter improved their understanding of the training ▪ 92% of the trainees confirmed that the availability of training materials in French improved their understanding of various subject matters ▪ 85% of the trainees said that the availability of interpreting services encouraged their participation and their engagement with the trainers. ▪ 90% recommended translation and interpretation services for future training ▪ 92% of them were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired ▪ 92% felt that the training goals were met ▪ 100% indicated that they will share the acquired knowledge

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 82% of the trainees wrote their additional comments/suggestions in French or Kirundi, as opposed to 3% in English.
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Table 4: PDT October 2013

PDT- August 2014	
Description	In August 2014, a PDT activity was conducted in Djibouti with the support of simultaneous interpreting services in French. One of the trainers was also fluent in Somali and did his training in Somali.
Challenges	All training materials were translated into French. Not all trainees were fluent in French. Some of the trainees were more fluent in Somali than they were in French.
Interventions	Simultaneous interpreting in French was relied on for presentations delivered in English. The interpreting team included the in-house interpreter and an experienced and trained freelance interpreter.
Feedback	<p>✚ Trainees' feedback is summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% of the trainees welcomed the use of interpreting services and said that the latter improved their understanding of the training ▪ 90% of the trainees confirmed that the availability of training materials in French improved their understanding of various subject matters ▪ 87% of the trainees said that the availability of interpreting services encouraged their participation and their engagement with the trainers. ▪ 90% recommended translation and interpretation services for future training ▪ 100% of them were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired ▪ 100% felt that the training goals were met ▪ 100% indicated that they will share the acquired knowledge ▪ 53% of the trainees wrote their additional comments/suggestions in French as opposed to 0% in English.

Table 5: PDT August 2014

PDT- December 2014	
Description	In December 2014, a PDT activity was conducted in Burundi with the support of simultaneous interpreting services in French and Kirundi. One of the trainers was also fluent in French and did his training in French.
Challenges	All training materials were translated into French.
Interventions	Simultaneous interpreting into French was relied on for presentations delivered in English. The interpreting team was composed of the in-house interpreter and an experienced and trained freelance interpreter.
Feedback	<p>✚ Trainees' feedback is summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 92% of the trainees welcomed the use of interpreting services and said that the latter improved their understanding of the training ▪ 97% of the trainees confirmed that the availability of training materials in French improved their understanding of various subject matters

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 94% of the trainees said that the availability of interpreting services encouraged their participation and their engagement with the trainers. ▪ 97% recommended translation and interpretation services for future training ▪ 100% of them were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired ▪ 92% felt that the training goals were met ▪ 100% indicated that they will share the acquired knowledge ▪ 94% of the trainees wrote their additional comments/suggestions in French or Kirundi, as opposed to 0% in English.
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Table 6: PDT December 2014

UNLOG- April 2012	
Description	In April 2012, the first UNLOG course in which trainees from various TCCs (Burundi, Uganda and Kenya) participated was held at the IPSTC in Karen, Nairobi, Kenya. The entire training was delivered in English and discussion groups were not segregated along language lines (i.e. French speaking trainees and English speaking trainees were asked to work in discussion groups and no interpreting services were offered).
Challenges	All training materials were in English. No interpretation services were provided.
Interventions	None
Feedback	<p>✚ Trainees' feedback (from both English speaking trainees and French speaking trainees) is summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 46% of the trainees requested for interpreting services in French ▪ 50% of the trainees requested for training materials written in French ▪ 92% of them were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired ▪ 83% felt that the training goals were met ▪ 100% indicated that they will share the acquired knowledge ▪ 42% of the trainees' feedback was written in French ▪ 42% of the trainees' feedback was written in English.

Table 7: UNLOG April 2012

UNLOG-August 2012	
Description	In August 2012, the UNLOG course was conducted for AMISOM trainees from various TCC in Nairobi (IPSTC) with, for the first time, the availability of simultaneous interpreting services in French and English. The entire training was delivered in English and discussion groups were not segregated along language lines (i.e. French speaking trainees and English speaking trainees were asked to work in discussion groups but no interpreting services were offered during group work).
Challenges	Some of the training materials were not translated into French by the in-house translator. Given the numerous requests for translations were so many and the in-house resources limited to 1 translator, not all materials were translated in time.
Interventions	Simultaneous interpreting was relied on to counter the lack of training material in French. The interpreters who serviced this training were experienced freelance interpreters including the in-house interpreter.

Feedback	<p>✚ Trainees’ feedback is summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% of the trainees welcomed the use of interpreting services and said that the latter improved their understanding of the training ▪ 100% of the trainees confirmed that the availability of training materials in French improved their understanding of various subject matters ▪ 67% insisted that the training materials that was not yet available in French should be translated expeditiously ▪ 100% of the trainees said that the availability of interpreting services encouraged their participation and their engagement with the trainers. ▪ 100% recommended translation and interpretation services for future training ▪ 100% of them were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired ▪ 87% felt that the training goals were met ▪ 100% indicated that they will share the acquired knowledge ▪ 89% of the trainees' feedback was written in French. <p>Trainers’ and training coordinator’s feedback was formulated as follows: <i>“The trainees also agreed that the availability of interpreting services played an important role in their understanding of the course content and participation in discussions. Some trainees remarked that the course duration should be extended. A number of participants noted that some presentations were not available in French and request that every effort should be made to avail all presentations in French for the benefit of the French speakers.”¹⁰</i></p>
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Table 8: UNLOG August 2012

UNLOG-April 2013	
Description	<p>In April 2013, the UNLOG course was conducted for AMISOM trainees from various TCC in Nairobi (IPSTC) and simultaneous interpreting services in French and English were available.</p> <p>The entire training was delivered in English and discussion groups were not segregated along language lines (ie French speaking trainees and English speaking trainees were asked to work in discussion groups but no interpreting services were offered during group work).</p>
Challenges	<p>Some of the training materials were not translated into French by the in-house translator. Given the numerous requests for translations and that training materials were updated at the last minute in some cases, the in-house resources limited to 1 translator, not all materials were translated in time.</p>
Interventions	<p>Simultaneous interpreting into French was relied on to counter the lack of training material in French. The interpreters who serviced this training were experienced freelance interpreters including the in-house interpreter.</p>
Feedback	<p>✚ Trainees’ feedback is summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% of the trainees welcomed the use of interpreting services and said that the latter improved their understanding of the training ▪ 88% of the trainees confirmed that the availability of training materials in French improved their understanding of various subject matters

¹⁰UN Logistics Training for AMISOM Evaluation Report August 2012

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 12% insisted that the training materials that was not yet available in French should be translated expeditiously ▪ 100% of the trainees said that the availability of interpreting services encouraged their participation and their engagement with the trainers. ▪ 97% recommended translation and interpretation services for future training ▪ 100% of them were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired ▪ 87% felt that the training goals were met ▪ 100% indicated that they will share the acquired knowledge ▪ 35% of the trainees' additional comments was written in French compared to 32% in English.
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Table 9: UNLOG April 2013

UNLOG-November 2013	
Description	<p>In November 2013, the UNLOG course was conducted for AMISOM trainees from various TCC in Nairobi (IPSTC) and simultaneous interpreting services in French and English were available.</p> <p>The entire training was delivered in English and discussion groups were not segregated along language lines (i.e. French speaking trainees and English speaking trainees were asked to work in discussion groups but no interpreting services were offered during group work).</p>
Challenges	<p>Some of the training materials were not translated into French. The contract of the in-house translator expired in mid-November 2013.</p> <p>Given that the requests for translation services were so many and that training materials were updated at the last minute in some cases, the in-house resources limited to one translator, not all materials were translated in time for this training.</p>
Interventions	<p>Simultaneous interpreting was relied on to counter the lack of training material in French. The interpreters who serviced this training were experienced freelance interpreters including the in-house interpreter.</p>
Feedback	<p>✚ Trainees' feedback is summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% of the trainees welcomed the use of interpreting services and said that the latter improved their understanding of the training ▪ 92% of the trainees confirmed that the availability of training materials in French improved their understanding of various subject matters ▪ 33% insisted that the training materials that was not yet available in French should be translated expeditiously ▪ 100% of the trainees said that the availability of interpreting services encouraged their participation and their engagement with the trainers. ▪ 96% recommended translation and interpretation services for future training ▪ 100% of them were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired ▪ 100% felt that the training goals were met ▪ 100% indicated that they will share the acquired knowledge ▪ 25% of the trainees' additional comments was written in French compared to 67% in English.

Table 10: UNLOG November 2013

UNLOG-June 2014	
Description	In June 2014, the UNLOG course was conducted for AMISOM trainees from various TCC in Nairobi (IPSTC) and simultaneous interpreting services in French and English were available. The entire training was delivered in English with the exception of one presentation that was given in French. Discussion groups were segregated along language lines.
Challenges	All training materials were translated into French by the in-house translator.
Interventions	Simultaneous interpreting was relied on to counter the lack of training material in French. The interpreters who serviced this training were experienced freelance interpreters including the in-house interpreter.
Feedback	<p>✚ Trainees' feedback is summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% of the trainees welcomed the use of interpreting services and said that the latter improved their understanding of the training ▪ 100% of the trainees confirmed that the availability of training materials in French improved their understanding of various subject matters ▪ 100% of the trainees said that the availability of interpreting services encouraged their participation and their engagement with the trainers. ▪ 100% recommended translation and interpretation services for future training ▪ 100% of them were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired ▪ 100% felt that the training goals were met ▪ 100% indicated that they will share the acquired knowledge ▪ 33% of the trainees' additional comments was written in French compared to 52% in English.

Table 11: UNLOG June 2014

UNLOG- September 2014	
Description	In September 2014, the UNLOG course was conducted for AMISOM trainees from various TCC in Nairobi (IPSTC) and simultaneous interpreting services in French and English were available. The entire training was delivered in English with the exception of 1 presentation that was given in French. Discussion groups were segregated along language lines.
Challenges	All training materials were translated into French by the in-house translator.
Interventions	Simultaneous interpreting was relied on to counter the lack of training material in French. The interpreters who serviced this training were experienced freelance interpreters including the in-house interpreter.
Feedback	<p>✚ Trainees' feedback is summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% of the trainees welcomed the use of interpreting services and said that the latter improved their understanding of the training ▪ 92% of the trainees confirmed that the availability of training materials in French improved their understanding of various subject matters ▪ 100% of the trainees said that the availability of interpreting services encouraged their participation and their engagement with the trainers.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 96% recommended translation and interpretation services for future training ▪ 100% of them were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired ▪ 100% felt that the training goals were met ▪ 100% indicated that they will share the acquired knowledge ▪ 36% of the trainees' additional comments was written in French compared to 40% in English.
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Table 12: UNLOG September 2014

UNLOG- November 2014	
Description	<p>In November 2014, the UNLOG course was conducted for AMISOM trainees from various TCC in Nairobi (IPSTC) and simultaneous interpreting services in French and English were available.</p> <p>The entire training was delivered in English with the exception of 1 presentation that was given in French.</p> <p>Discussion groups were segregated along language lines.</p>
Challenges	All training materials were translated into French by the in-house translator.
Interventions	Simultaneous interpreting was relied on to counter the lack of training material in French. The interpreters who serviced this training were experienced freelance interpreters including the in-house interpreter.
Feedback	<p>🚩 Trainees' feedback is summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% of the trainees welcomed the use of interpreting services and said that the latter improved their understanding of the training ▪ 100% of the trainees confirmed that the availability of training materials in French improved their understanding of various subject matters ▪ 100% of the trainees said that the availability of interpreting services encouraged their participation and their engagement with the trainers. ▪ 89% recommended translation and interpretation services for future training ▪ 94% of them were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired ▪ 100% felt that the training goals were met ▪ 100% indicated that they will share the acquired knowledge ▪ 33% of the trainees' additional comments was written in French compared to 67% in English.

Table 13: UNLOG November 2014

TRAINERS' FEEDBACK FROM A QUESTIONNAIRE	
Description	A questionnaire was sent out to 6 regular trainers for the PDT and the UNLOG courses (see Annex x for a copy). The response rate was 100%.
QUESTIONS	RESPONSES
Q1: Have you trained AMISOM Personnel in a multicultural, multilingual setting in which some participants' language of choice was not English?	Yes – 100%
Q1b: Which training activity (PDT, UN Logistics...). Please name a couple	PDT – 83% UNLOG – 33%
Q2: In cases when interpreting services were offered, how would you rate their impact on your training, most specifically the realisation of your training objectives?	Very positive – 40%, Positive – 60%
Q2b: Explanation	<p><i>R1: The impact is positive because from the trainer's perspective one has been able to pass the message to the trainees. However some information and nuances of a technical subject will still get lost in the translation.</i></p> <p><i>R2: 1. It made the flow of training easy 2. The Non-English speakers understood what was being taught 3. Facilitators did not have to worry about translation</i></p> <p><i>R3: Communication is effective when the recipient understands the message.</i></p> <p><i>R4: The participants engaged and were able to ask questions meaning they had understood the content.</i></p> <p><i>R5: There was an enhanced understanding of training content by trainees.</i></p>
Q3: How would you rate your interaction with the trainees in a multicultural setting when interpreting is offered compared to when it is not?	<i>Much better – 100%</i>
Q4: Would you say that the availability of in-house translation and interpretation services within UNSOA had an impact on your training activity with AMISOM personnel?	Very positive: 60% Positive: 20% Negative: 20%
Q4b: Explanation	<i>R1: Having an in-house person makes it possible for more interaction in the preparatory stage between the trainer and the translator. This aids in the translation. The in-house translator will also be better acquainted with the work of the Office and therefore have a better</i>

	<p><i>understanding of the various subjects than an external person would have.</i></p> <p><i>R2: It was always easy to rely on an in-house translation/interpretation for activities that required immediate attention.</i></p> <p><i>R3: Simultaneous interpretation made the training flow smoothly.</i></p> <p><i>R4: The training materials were interpreted beforehand therefore making the participants understand the content better.</i></p> <p><i>R5: Participants are more confident to contribute to discussions and thus better training results..</i></p>
<p>Q5: How likely is it that you would recommend Interpreting Services in training activities in a multicultural/ pluri-linguistic setting to a friend or colleague?</p>	<p>Extremely likely: 83%</p> <p>Likely: 17%</p>
<p>Q6: In your own words and based on your experience, what added value does interpreting bring to UNSOA training activities for AMISOM, if any?</p>	<p><i>R1: Interpreting/translating bridges the language gap. Without that it would be impossible for most trainers to train troops who do not ordinarily use English in their daily activities. The translation makes it possible for more AMISOM troops to be trained by subject matter experts.</i></p> <p><i>R2: It added a lot of value to UNSOA training activities as the services helped in building capacity for AMISOM.</i></p> <p><i>R3: Effective communication, reflects professionalism and ensures that the values of the UN are understood. Trainees most of whom are serving the UN for the first time benefit from a clear understanding of what is involved when addressed in their own language.</i></p> <p><i>R4: well it makes the participants understand the content well and also better engage with the trainers as they are able to ask questions and they get responses or clarification.</i></p> <p><i>R5: Added value cannot be measured as in addition to better understanding, there is the element of enhanced contribution, increased interaction with trainees, confidence boost to training coordinator and facilitators and overall better sense of accomplishment.</i></p> <p><i>R6: Francophone participants, who represent at least a good 15% of troops contributed also get value added & improve operation of their TCCs in theatre. Other languages such as Kirundi, Arabic, & Amharic could prove more difficult to integrate, but creative ways can</i></p>

	<p><i>be found to address those needs; by employing a Burundian French translator, for example, Kirundi could unofficially be integrated should that prove necessary... It is indispensable! The fact that half the TCCS are Francophone the other half Anglophone makes it so. Having translators made it possible for all participants to engage with the courses at the same level and to learn from each other as well as from all facilitators, irrespective of their language.</i></p>
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Table 14: Responses from trainers collected with a Monkey Survey Questionnaire

2.4 Summary

This chapter provides a brief overview of the challenges, interventions and feedback obtained from the trainees, the trainers and the training coordinators involved in the two UNSOA training activities from which data for this research was drawn. These two courses were selected based on the fact that they benefitted the most from the language services support available in UNSOA between 2012 and 2014 and as such, offer a good basis for determining the place of interpreting in these training activities.

The obtained data is in the form of trainees’ evaluation forms – completed at the end of each training activity- presented here as a table describing the training activity, the composition of the participants in each course, the challenges experienced during each training with regards to effectively communicating with the trainees, the interventions/ measures put in place to address those challenges and a summary of the trainees’ views on the training with a particular emphasis on the communication aspect of the training activity.

It also provides the trainers’ evaluation of the impact of interpreting on these training activities and the added value of this service from the perspective of the trainers and the training coordinator.

CHAPTER THREE

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PLACE OF INTERPRETING IN THE SAMPLED TRAINING ACTIVITIES

3.1 The Impact of language barrier on the training

3.1.1 On Pre-deployment Training Activities: – Trainees' feedback

At the end of the first PDT activity in November 2011, trainees' feedback (see table 1) clearly indicates that language barrier had a negative impact on the training activity.

Indeed, given that:

- 30% of the trainees requested for interpreting services,
- 23% of the trainees requested for training materials written in French and/or Kirundi.

It can be concluded that at least one third of the class would have followed the training better had the latter been delivered in a language that they understood (Kirundi or French).

In addition, the fact that

- 70% of the trainees observed that the time allocated to the training was too little to understand the training fully coupled with the training coordinator's comments and recommendation:

" The main challenge experienced during the training was the language barrier especially in Burundi where French is the first language; but given that most of the soldiers do not master it, (consecutive) interpreting had to be done (improvised) into their mother tongue Kirundi. It is recommended that: 1) the training presentations be translated into French so that French speaking participants can follow and understand the training better. 2) more time is required also when dealing with Burundi because of consecutive interpreting¹¹" (emphasis added)

This indicates that the training could be delivered more efficiently if the issue of the language gap is addressed.

The observation of limited time for the PDT can be due to:

¹¹UN Mandatory Evaluation Report November 2011- January 2012

- a large curriculum squeezed in a limited training period, or
- additional time required to provide consecutive interpreting as suggested by the training coordinator, or
- both.

At the time of these comments, the training coordinators in UNSOA were not familiar with simultaneous interpreting; hence the recommendation of consecutive interpreting, which indeed requires more time. Once the difference between consecutive and simultaneous interpreting was explained to them, they opted to use simultaneous interpreting in subsequent training activities. An analysis of the trainees' feedback in training where simultaneous interpreting was provided will help decipher the real cause behind this observation. (see below).

However, it can be observed that:

- *75% of the trainees were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired*

This suggests that although a number of trainees would have preferred the training to be delivered in a language they are familiar with, some of the trainees understood enough to appreciate the value of the training.

While the feedback shows that 70% of the trainees felt that the training goals were met, the researcher refrains from drawing conclusions on this observation as it is unclear whether the goals were clearly explained and understood at the beginning of the training. It is therefore difficult to assess with certainty the veracity of this feedback. Further research would be needed to do so.

PDT being a sort of training of the trainers since participants are expected to share the acquired knowledge with men under their command; the fact that:

- *88% of the trainees indicate that will share the acquired knowledge*

can be a good thing (if the trainees understood the training) or a bad thing (if the trainees did not understand the training fully as seems to be the case in the November 2011 PDT). Particularly if the trainees do not have useful training materials to refer to as they train men under their command (55%

of the trainees did not find the training handouts/materials useful);since they will be sharing misunderstood concepts on the UN standards to be observed in the mission area once deployed. This can potentially have disastrous effects on the peacekeepers themselves, the countries that deployed them and AMISOM in general.

In addition,

- *100% of the trainees' feedback was written in either French or Kirundi.*

This is an important fact given that this additional trainees' feedback had important suggestions and explanations needed by UNSOA TS to improve their training and training delivery.

Since UNSOA had no in-house translator/ interpreter, this feedback remained filed till April 2012 when the newly hired consultant translated the feedback and submitted it to the training coordinators and the chief training officer, enabling thus the section to start implementing some of the suggestions therein contained.

It is clear from the above that UNSOA TS was aware of the fact that language barrier was an impediment to the effectiveness of the PDT activity in Burundi –the only French speaking TCC at the time – and that they were already thinking of ways to bridge that gap and improve the effectiveness of the course. It is this awareness that led the Chief Training Officer to seek the services of a consultant who would be hired in April 2012 to provide interpreting and translation services in French, English and Kirundi.

3.1.2 UN Logistics Course – Trainees' feedback

A UNLOG Course was delivered to 25 trainees from Burundi, Uganda and Kenya in April 2012. The lectures were all done in English and trainees were required to work in groups that were not segregated along language lines. No interpreting support was provided neither in the plenary nor in the discussion groups.

The trainees' feedback indicates that:

- 46% of the trainees requested for interpreting services in French
- 50% of the trainees requested for training materials written in French

Given that 50% of the participants were from Burundi, it is safe to deduce that the large majority –if not all- of the Burundian trainees would have benefitted from language services support in this training. However, an important degree of satisfaction with the training can be observed in the percentages below. This can be explained by the fact that the officers attending this course are high ranking officers (from Majors up to Colonels) with, generally, a higher level of understanding of English –even though they may be less comfortable in expressing themselves in English-

- 92% of them were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired
- 83% felt that the training goals were met

The importance attached to this course by the trainees is reflected in the fact that 100% indicated that they will share the acquired knowledge. Similarly to the analysis of PDT above, this can be positive for the mission if the logistical concepts and taught strategies are effectively communicated to and assimilated by the trainees. But it is potentially detrimental to the mission, the TCCs and UNSOA if these concepts and strategies are misunderstood and shared with other officers, implemented on the field as this directly impacts the effectiveness of the logistical support package provided by UNSOA, the agility and operational effectiveness of AMISOM in the field, the survival and impact of the troops on the ground in their fight against Al Shabaab and ultimately the Peace and Stability in Somalia and the Region.

Finally, just as is the case in PDT, trainees' feedback which is needed by the course director to effect relevant changes in the UNLOG course was written in both English and French.

- 42% of the trainees' feedback was written in French
- 42% of the trainees' feedback was written in English

Therefore, language services – interpreting and translation – were necessary in order to communicate that feedback to the course director in order to improve the course and adapt it to the needs of the trainees.

After this UNLOG course, UNSOA Chief Training Officer requested the newly hired in-house interpreter and translator to translate the trainees feedback and to begin translating the training materials in French. Interpreting services for this course were also discussed between the Chief Training Officer and the consultant and it was agreed that the next course would benefit from language support services (interpreting and translation).

3.2 Effectiveness of the proposed solution to bridge the language gap during training activities

3.2.1 Pre-deployment Training Activities – Trainees’ feedback

Subsequent PDT activities (until December 2014) were delivered with the support of simultaneous interpreting either by the consultant hired to provide interpreting and translation services and/or a team of external interpreters carefully selected/vetted by the consultant.

A close look at the feedback (see table 2) from the April 2012 PDT activity reveals:

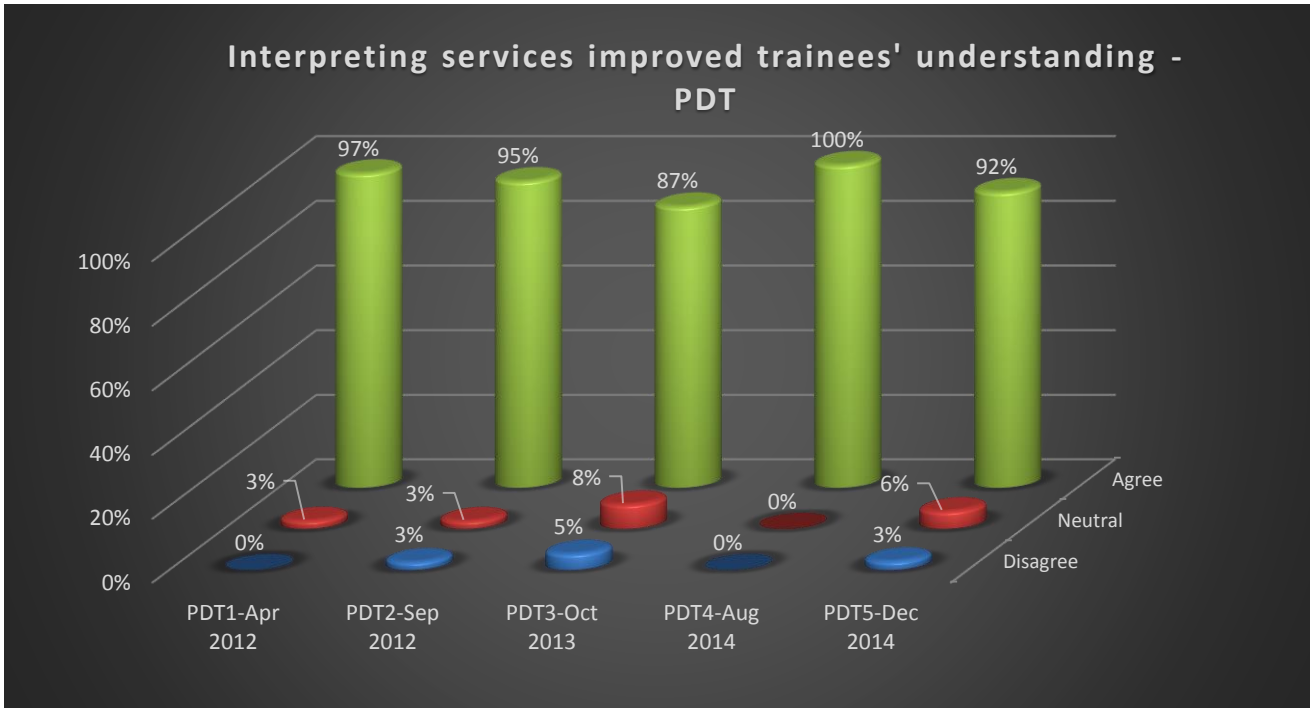
- i. That the availability of language support services -simultaneous interpreting and translation services- had a significant impact in that it allowed the trainees to grasp the taught concepts within the allocated time as suggested by the following statistics:
 - 97% of the trainees welcomed the use of interpreting services and said that the latter improved their understanding of the training
 - 92% of the trainees confirmed that the availability of training materials in French improved their understanding of various subject matters
 - 97% of the trainees said that the availability of interpreting services encouraged their participation and their engagement with the trainers.

- ii. That more effort needed to be expended to ensure that training materials were fully available in a language that the trainees understand:
- 33% insisted that the training materials that were not yet available in French should be translated expeditiously
- iii. A unanimous agreement with regards to the effectiveness of the training and a commitment by the officers to share the acquired knowledge with men under their command.
- 100% (compared to 75% previously) of them were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired
 - 100% (compared to 70% previously) felt that the training goals were met
 - 100% (compared to 88% previously) indicated that they will share the acquired knowledge
- iv. That 95% of the trainees' feedback was written in either French or Kirundi and translated within days by the in-house translator allowing training coordinators sufficient time to incorporate the necessary changes/suggestions into subsequent training activities.
- v. The positive impact of interpreting services on the training was also observed by the trainers and the training coordinator and eloquently described in their feedback as follows:

“The April training conducted in Bujumbura was the first time UNSOA used a translator/interpreter who managed to translate the training materials in French and also interpret from English to French/Kirundi. The Burundian trainees were very excited about the training as they could understand it in their mother tongue and were able to ask questions in Kirundi or French which were in turn interpreted into English by the interpreter and the facilitators were able to respond to them. The trainers felt that the training in Bujumbura has considerably improved with the simultaneous interpretation in Kirundi and in French.”¹²(emphasis added)

From then on, interpreting services were provided at every PDT activity carried out in a multicultural and multilingual context. A statistical representation of the trainees' feedback (tables 3 to 6) over time is presented below:

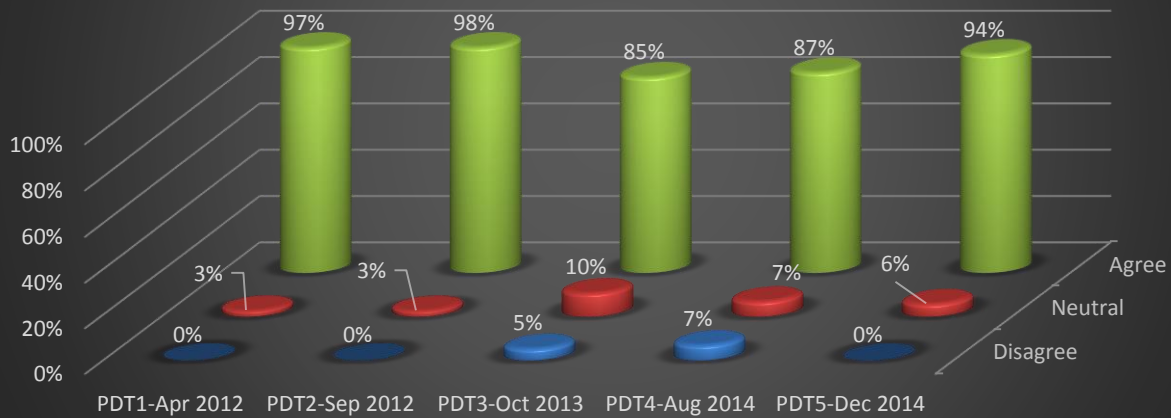
¹²UN Mandatory Evaluation Report April 2012



This graph clearly shows that, with the exception of the October 2013 PDT, an overwhelming majority (95% or more) of trainees credit interpreting services with helping them to understand better the training subject matters.

It was noted that the interpreting team that supported the October 2013 PDT was composed of the in-house interpreter and a locally recruited interpreter with limited experience in the subjects covered in the training of AMISOM peacekeepers. This explains the lower percentage (87%) in 2013 compared to the other PDT activities.

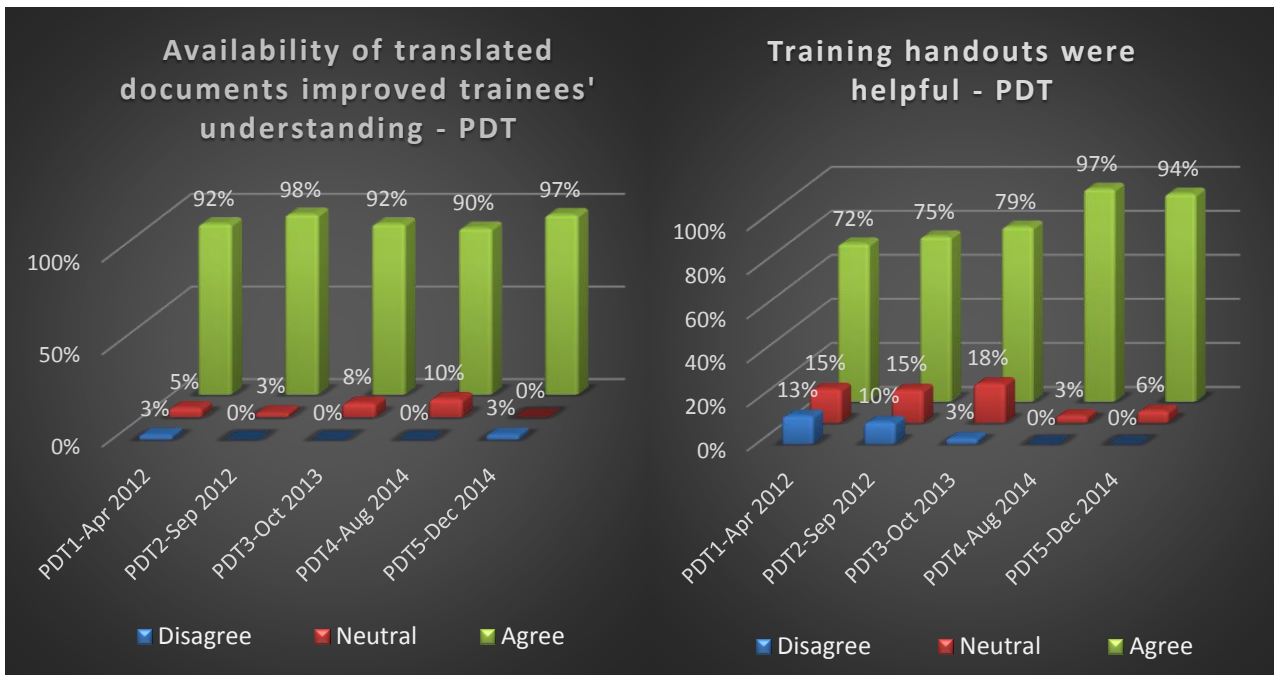
The use of Simultaneous Interpreting Services encouraged trainees' participation during the training - PDT



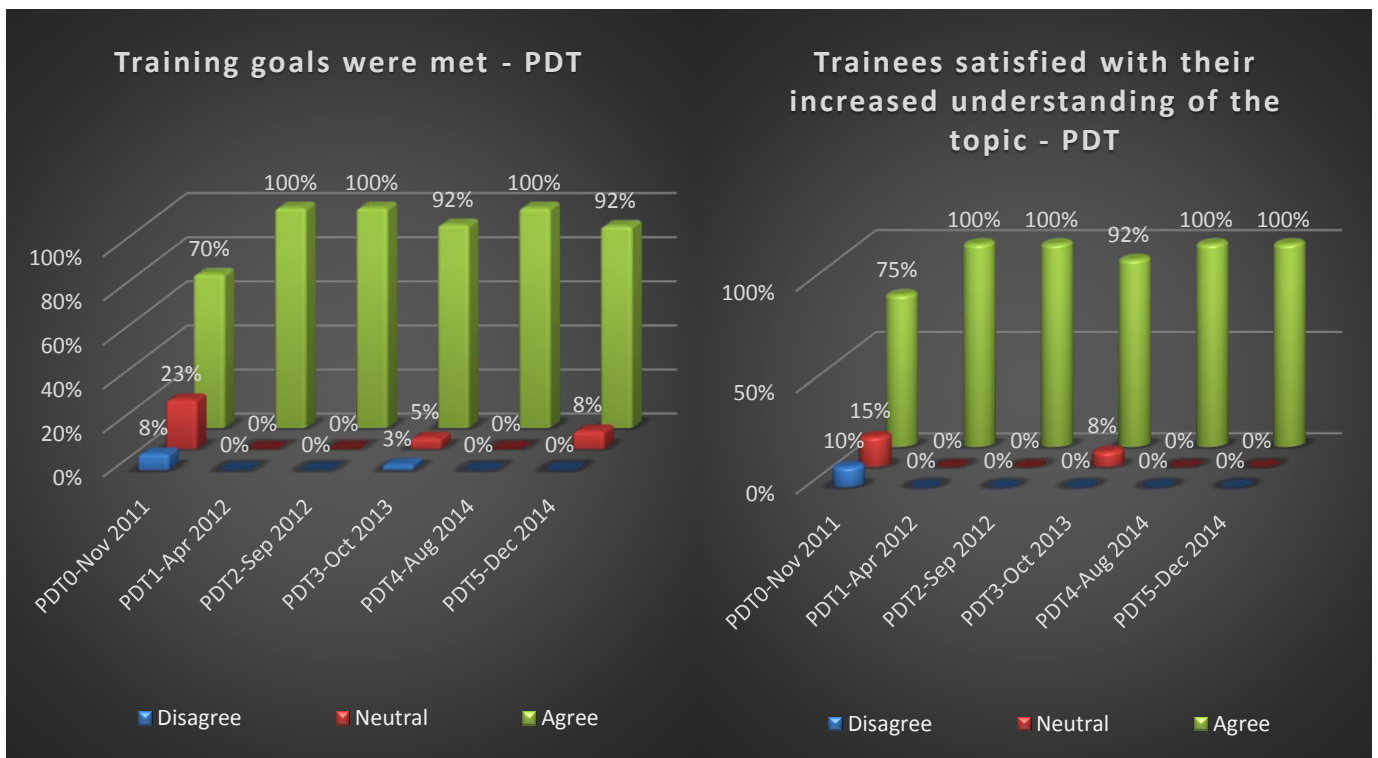
Similarly, interpreting helped improve trainees' participation and interaction with the trainers during the PDT activities (94% or more agree) with lower agreement percentages in October 2013 (85%) - most likely for the same reason mentioned above - and August 2014 (87%).

The lower percentage in August 2014 (87%) is explained by the fact that this training was carried out in Djibouti - the first ever- and interpreting was provided in English and in French only while some of the trainees were more fluent in Somali than in French. This fact was observed when one of the trainers who was fluent in English and Somali asked the trainees to decide on the language he should use and the latter unanimously voted for Somali and proceeded to engage fully with this trainer during his sessions. The participation rate was lower for other classes despite the interpreting services into French, suggesting that Somali interpreting services should also be offered in the future.

The positive impact of language services was also observed for the translation services as shown pictorially in the graphs below. However the level of satisfaction with the translation services did not match that of the interpreting services and that can be explained by the fact that the demands for translation support at UNSOA TS far outweighed the available resources (the in-house translator and the in-house interpreter were one and the same person) and some of the training materials were submitted for translation much too late and ended up being presented using the English version only.



The overall impact of the language services can be seen in the graphical representation of the trainees' satisfaction with the increased knowledge acquired from the PDT training and their assessment of the realisation (attainment) of the training goals - which were explained to them in a language they understand (starting with April 2012) at the beginning of the training - across the training period covered by this research.



3.2.2 UN Logistics Course – Trainees’ feedback

The following UNLOG course (August 2012 as shown in table 8) was delivered with the support of interpreting services.

As explained above, due to the limited resources for in-house translation services and the large volume of documents to be translated, only some of the training materials had been translated into French.

In addition, due to the limited size of the training team, no interpreting support was provided during the group discussions (still not segregated along language lines at this time).

However interpreting services were provided during the plenary session by a team composed of experienced freelance interpreters and the in-house interpreter.

The percentages in table 8 indicate that a 100% of the trainees:

- i. welcomed the use of interpreting services and said that the latter improved their understanding of the training
- ii. confirmed that the availability of training materials in French improved their understanding of various subject matters
- iii. said that the availability of interpreting services encouraged their participation and their engagement with the trainers.
- iv. recommended translation and interpretation services for future training
- vi. were satisfied with the increased knowledge they acquired
- vii. indicated that they will share the acquired knowledge

This illustrates a clear endorsement of the interpreting support services and a clear expectation that this kind of support is maintained for future training activities.

Translation services was further commented by 67% of the trainees who insisted that the training materials that were not yet available in French should be translated expeditiously; indicating thus to the training section at UNSOA that their capacity at hand at that time was insufficient to effectively meet the demand.

Finally, 87% of the trainees (compared to 83% in the first previous course) felt that the training goals were met.

Additional comments/ suggestions from trainees were written, at 89%, in French.

This analysis was echoed by the trainers' and training coordinator's feedback which was formulated as follows:

“The trainees also agreed that the availability of interpreting services played an important role in their understanding of the course content and participation in discussions. Some trainees remarked that the course duration should be extended. A number of participants noted that some presentations were not available in French and request that every effort should be made to avail all presentations in French for the benefit of the French speakers.¹³”

The rate of endorsement for the interpreting services – and the translation services - continued to increase in subsequent UNLOG course (see tables 9 and 10) indicating that this training activity benefitted from the language services support put in place by the Training Section and the effectiveness derived from having an in-house translator/interpreter.

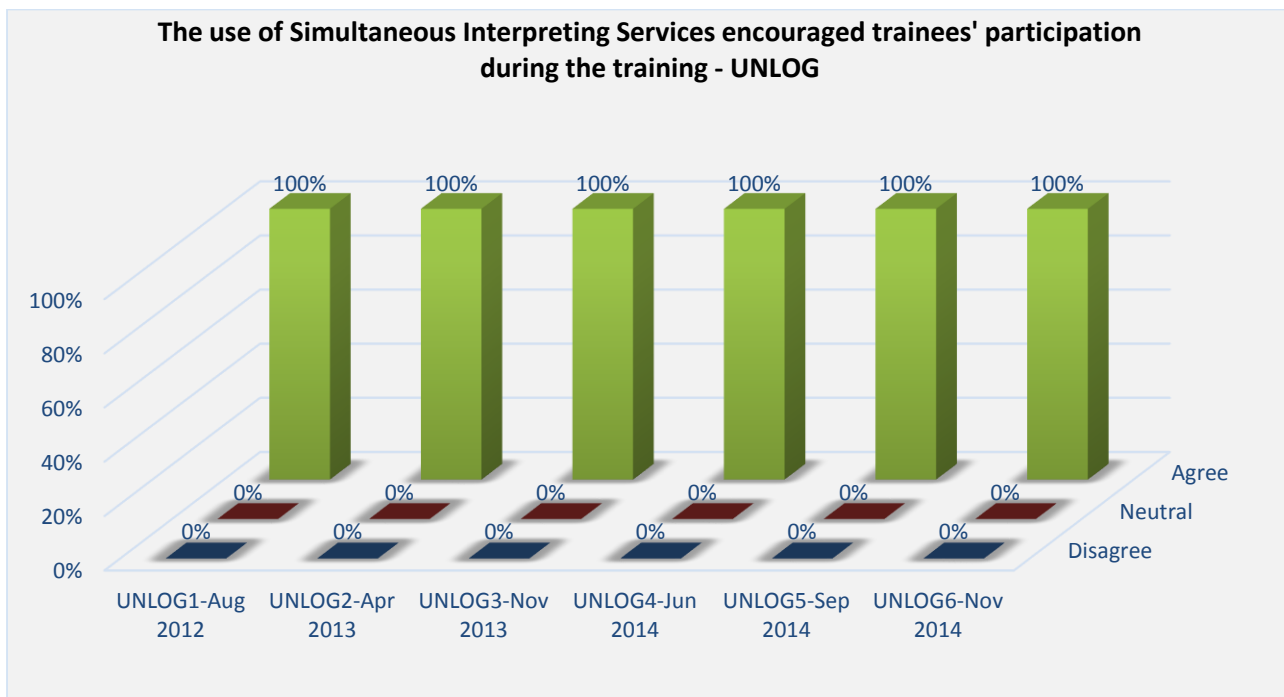
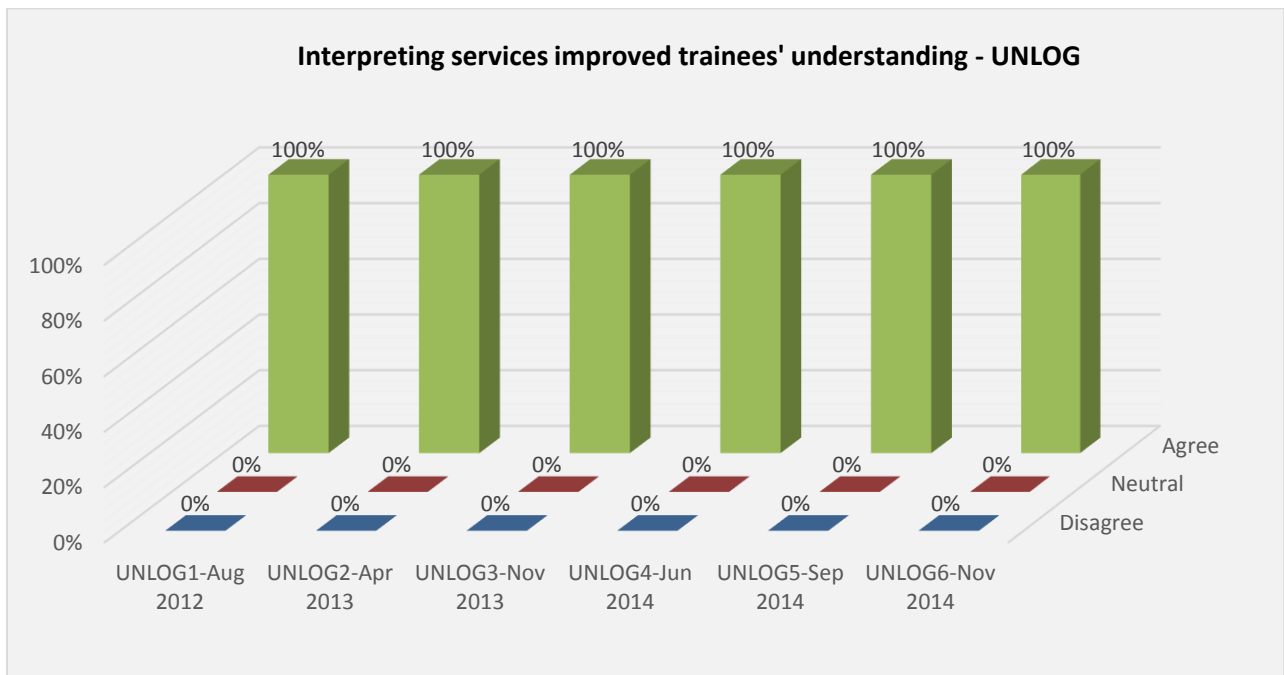
A net increase in the effectiveness of solutions adopted by UNSOA is even clearer in UNLOG courses taking place after June 2014 (tables 11 to 14). This can be explained by the fact that, starting with June 2014, the discussion groups at the UNLOG – which are a big part of the learning process – were segregated along language lines allowing French speaking trainees to work in the same discussion group thus effectively solving the language gap and circumventing the limited interpreting resources which insufficient to allow the provision of interpreting services in the discussion groups.

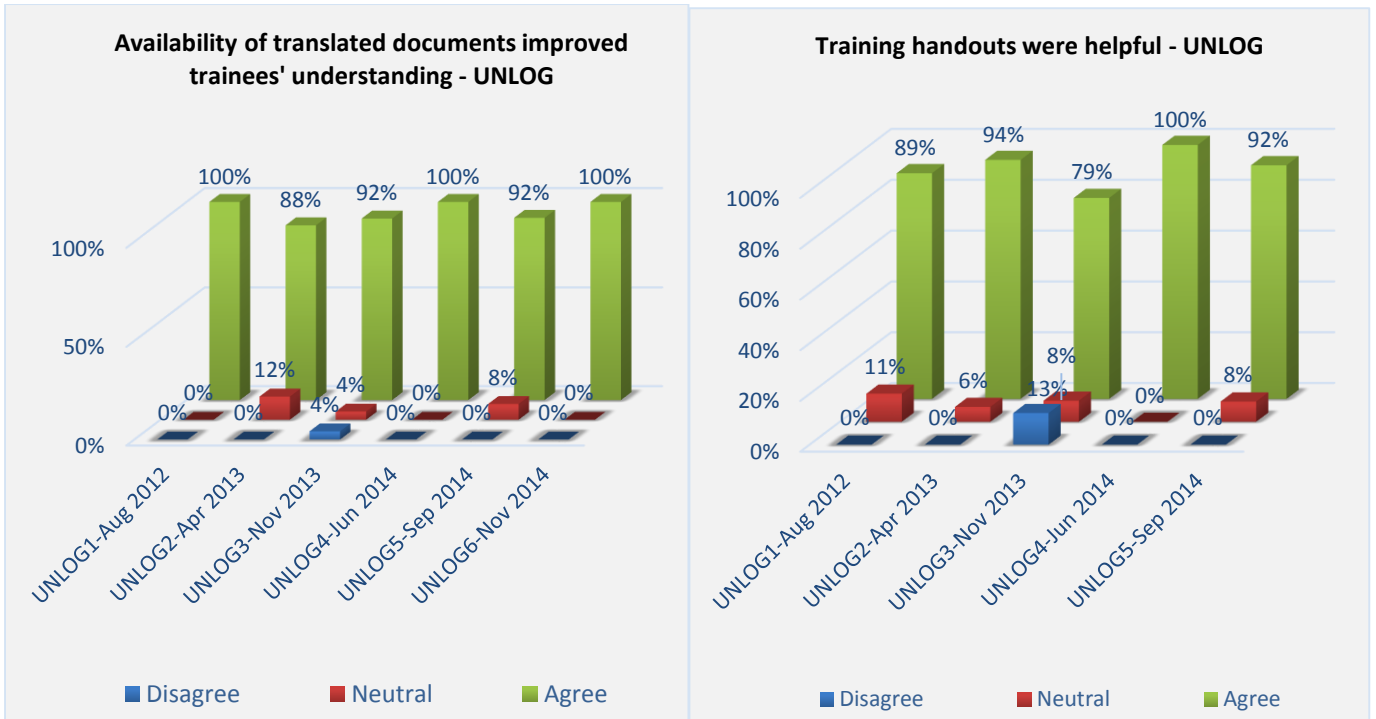
The graphs below illustrate the growing effectiveness of the UNLOG course in relation to language support services – with a particular emphasis on interpreting services.

The graphs show that in November 2013, the translated materials received a low rating by the trainees and this is explained by the gaps between the various short term contracts awarded to the consultant responsible for providing language support services. Translation would suffer the most as it requires

¹³UN Logistics Training for AMISOM Evaluation Report August 2012

time and constant updating of the training materials which was not done by UNSOA TS as they had no other qualified staff assigned to provide these services on a permanent basis.

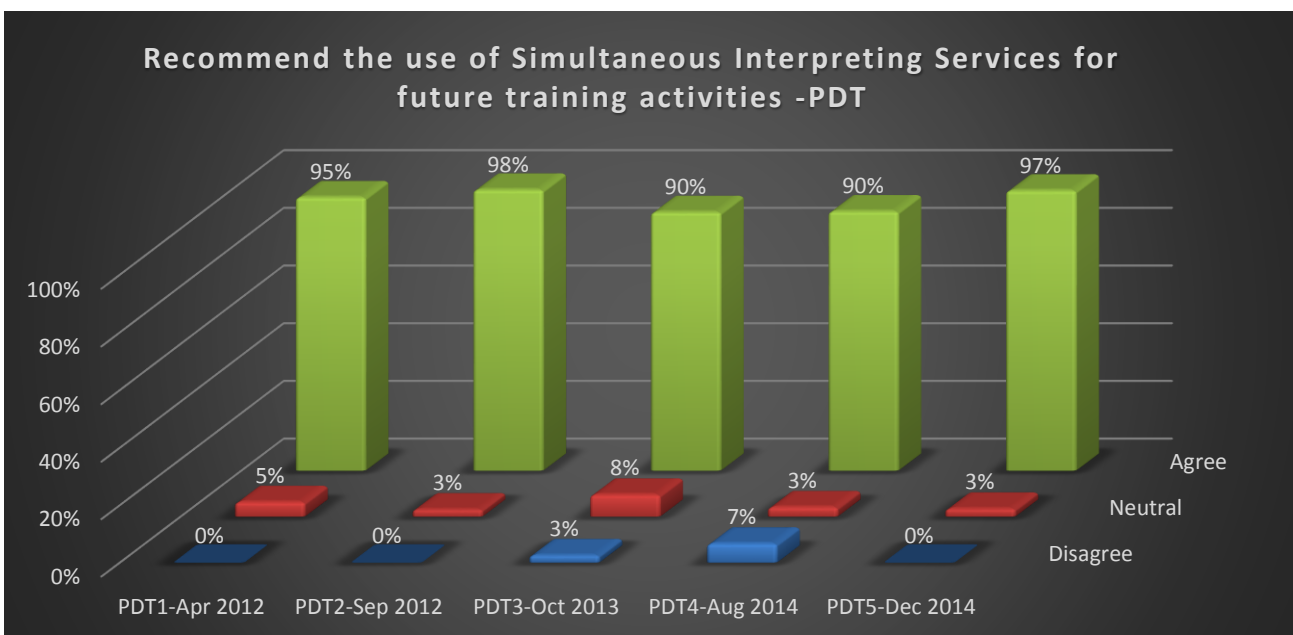




3.3 The place of interpreting in the training of AMISOM peacekeepers by UNSOA

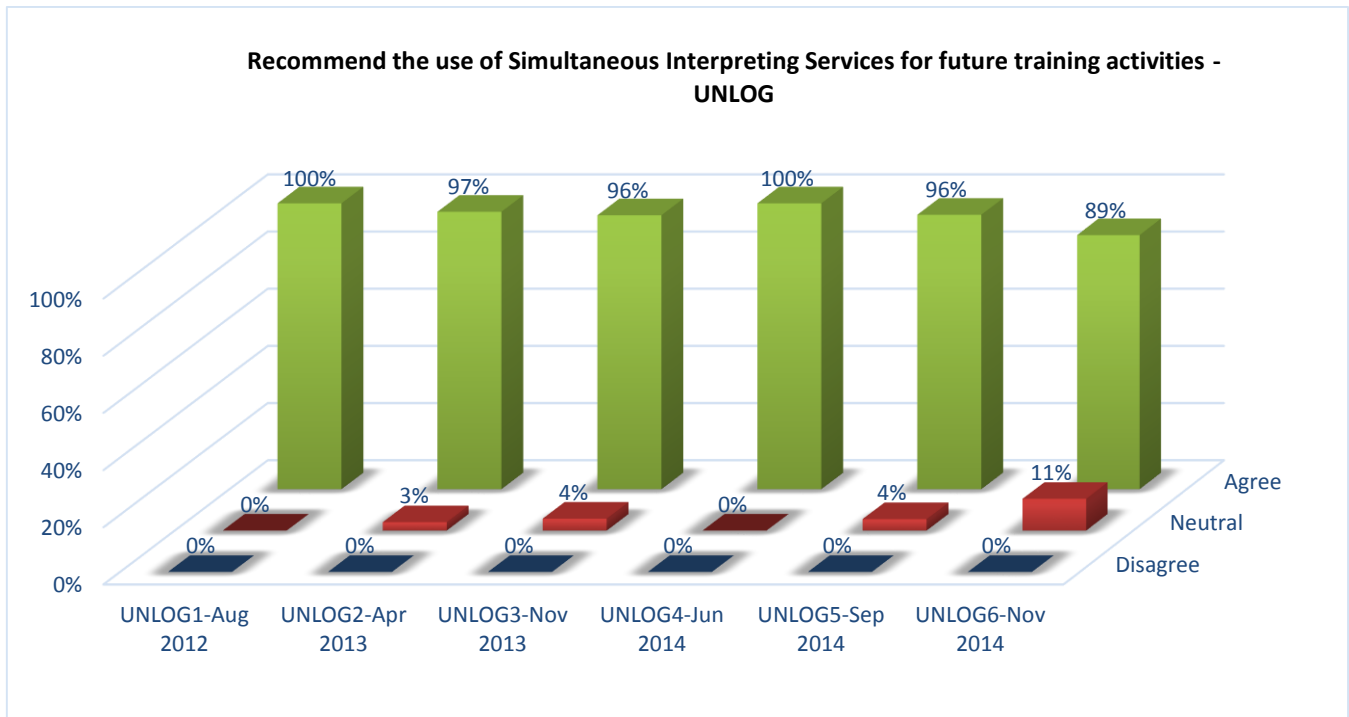
3.3.1 In Pre-deployment and UN Logistics Training Activities – Trainees’ feedback

As illustrated below 90% or more of the trainees in PDT activities recommended that interpreting services be provided during future training activities, recognising thus by a wide margin the important role that interpreting plays in ensuring the effectiveness of the training.



3.3.2 UN Logistics Course - – Trainees’ feedback

Similarly, trainees in the UNLOG course recognised by a wide margin the important role that interpreting plays in ensuring the effectiveness of the training.



3.4 Trainers’ Perspective

Trainers’ views collected through a SurveyMonkey questionnaire (see annexe 4) show that trainers unanimously agree that simultaneous interpreting had a positive impact on their training activity and the realisation of their training goals (Table 14, Q2) in that it:

- i. Allowed for effective communication of the message to the trainees
- ii. Allowed the participants to engage with the trainer and get their questions answered which in turn,
- iii. Proved to the trainer that the training content was understood and
- iv. Put the trainer at ease as she/he would focus on delivering the message and not have to deal with issues related to translation or interpretation issues.

Trainers also unanimously observed that the trainees-trainer interactions were “*much better*” (*emphasis added*) when interpreting was offered (Table 14, Q3) and were *extremely likely* (83%) and *likely* (17%) to recommend interpreting services in a multicultural training setting to a colleague or a friend.

With regards to the impact of in-house translation and interpretation services, 60% of the trainers rated it as very positive, 20% as positive and 20% as negative (Table 14, Q4). However a closer look at the explanation provided in support of these ratings, no negative comments were found which leads the researcher to believe that answer “negative” might have been clicked by error. In fact, the accompanying explanations included the following statements crediting the in-house language supports services with agility and efficiency in preparation and delivery of training activities leading to better training results:

- i. Having an in-house person makes it possible for more interaction in the preparatory stage between the trainer and the translator. This aids in the translation. The in-house translator will also be better acquainted with the work of the Office and therefore have a better understanding of the various subjects than an external person would have.
- ii. It was always easy to rely on an in-house translation/interpretation for activities that required immediate attention.
- iii. Participants are more confident to contribute to discussions and thus better training results.

Finally, the following statements exemplify and highlight the added value that interpreting brings to UNSOA training activities for AMISOM as stated by the trainers (Table 14, Q6):

- i. Interpreting/translating bridges the language gap. Without that; it would be impossible for most trainers to train troops who do not ordinarily use English in their daily activities. The translation makes it possible for more AMISOM troops to be trained by subject matter experts
- ii. It added a lot of value to UNSOA training activities as the services helped in building capacity for AMISOM.

- iii. (Interpreting ensures) Effective communication, reflects professionalism and ensures that the values of the UN are understood. Trainees most of whom are serving the UN for the first time benefit from a clear understanding of what is involved when addressed in their own language.
- iv. Added value cannot be measured as in addition to better understanding, there is the element of enhanced contribution, increased interaction with trainees, confidence boost to training coordinator and facilitators and overall better sense of accomplishment.
- v. Francophone participants, who represent at least a good 15% of troops contributed also get value added & improve operation of their TCCs in theatre. Other languages such as Kirundi, Arabic and Amharic could prove more difficult to integrate, but creative ways can be found to address those needs; by employing a Burundian French translator, for example, Kirundi could unofficially be integrated should that prove necessary.

3.5 Summary

The intercultural communication contextual framework indicates that language is one of the obstacles to effective communication in a multicultural encounter.

The analysis of the feedback from the trainees and the trainers analysed above corroborates this fact.

In summary, UNSOA TS recognised that the language barrier in both PDT and UNLOG was an impediment to the achievement of the training goals and remedied this situation by hiring a consultant to provide language services support to all their training activities carried out in a multilingual encounter for a time.

This solution positively influenced the effectiveness of the training activities and - to the extent that interpreting and translation services were requested by trainees for subsequent training activities-one can safely argue that, based on the findings of this research, interpreting services play an important role in assuring the effectiveness of AMISOM personnel peacekeepers by UNSOA. This role was nearly optimal (averaging 95%) when trained interpreters or interpreters with sufficient interpreting experience in the peacekeeping training subjects are hired to support the activities.

It has also been observed that, when there were no in-house language support services, the consultant was hired through a series of short term contracts that at times lapsed for a few months before being renewed - a 10% drop in the trainees' satisfaction with the course was recorded. Similarly the use of freelance interpreters with insufficient training and/or experience had an adverse effect on the effectiveness of the training activities.

Furthermore, to ensure that trainees' feedback was adequately understood by UNSOA TS, it was translated into English and acted upon to improve various aspects of the training by UNSOA training coordinators and section.

Trainers unanimously stated that interpreting added value to their training in that it helped them achieve their training goals, interact more with trainees, and communicate professionally, as well as serving as a confidence booster for the trainers and other facilitators and contributing greatly to a better sense of achievement by the trainers. What is more they would unanimously promote interpreting services amongst their colleagues and friends who train in multicultural contexts.

Finally, the fact that 98% of the trainees in PDT and a 100% in UNLOG recommended interpreting and translation services for future training is a testimony to the fact that the availability of in-house interpreting and translation capacities to support these training activities is crucial to their effectiveness. The place of interpreting in these training activities is therefore central.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

In this chapter, the findings of this research are discussed in relation to the research objectives stipulated in 1.3:

4.1 Language barrier as an impediment to the realisation of training objectives

The November 2011 PDT and the April 2012 UNLOG training activities clearly indicate that trainers and trainees observed and expressed the need to bridge the language gap during the training activities:

- The trainers and training coordinator pinpointed the language barrier as the main challenge for the PDT.
- Nearly half the trainees in the UNLOG (mainly all the French speaking trainees) requested for interpretation services and a French version of the training materials in UNLOG

The hindrance caused by the language gap in the first PDT was such that the training coordinator reached out to her counterpart in the Burundian Armed Forces in an effort to come up with an immediate solution.

The result was improvised consecutive interpreting carried out by a bilingual officer with no training nor experience in interpreting. The result of this improvised solution was that; while the trainees were able to understand the training better; they felt - as did the trainers - that the training duration was insufficient, particularly because of the additional time required for the consecutive interpreting.

Trainees feedback is key to the training section as it informs the trainers and training coordinators on the effectiveness of the training and is used to implement changes and trainees' suggestions with a view to optimise the realisation of the training objectives. In the initial training activities; trainees wrote their comments and suggestions in a language other than English:

- 100% of the trainees wrote in French or Kirundi in the case of the November 2011 PDT

- 42% wrote in French in the case of the April 2012 UNLOG

Given that the training coordinators who are tasked to evaluate the effectiveness of the training activities do not understand French nor Kirundi, their capacity to implement the requested changes is limited. They needed those comments translated or interpreted into English in order to understand and effect the required and relevant changes in the training activities to positively improve the realisation of the training goals.

4.2 Effectiveness of measures put in place to bridge the language gap

To address the glaring obstacle to the realisation of training goals that presented the language gap, the training section (TS) decided - after the November 2011 PDT- to hire a consultant to bridge the language gap during the training activities. The consultant was hired in April 2012 and given the task of translating the PDT training materials into French, the evaluation forms into French and Kirundi and to provide interpreting services during PDT and other training activities.

The effectiveness of this measure can be seen by looking at the feedback after the April 2012 PDT from:

- i. The trainers and training coordinators who remarked:

The April training conducted in Bujumbura was the first time UNSOA used a translator/interpreter who managed to translate the training materials in French and also interpret from English to French/Kirundi. The Burundian trainees were very excited about the training as they could understand it in their mother tongue and were able to ask questions in Kirundi or French which were in turn interpreted into English by the interpreter and the facilitators were able to respond to them. The trainers felt that the training in Bujumbura has considerably improved with the simultaneous interpretation in Kirundi and in French. (emphasis added).

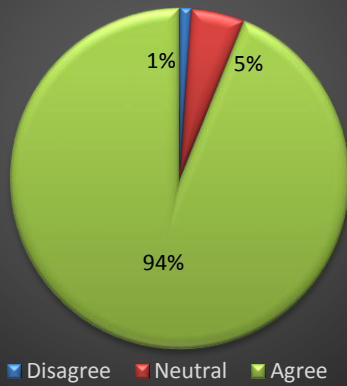
- ii.* The trainees who indicated that 97% of them felt that interpreting services not only helped them understand the training, encouraged their participation and interaction with the trainers but also recommended it for future training activities.

In addition to providing interpreting and translation for training activities, the consultant was tasked with setting up a vetting process for freelance interpreters that were increasingly required to support multiple training activities and other meetings, acquiring and coordinating the use of simultaneous interpreting equipment as well as assisting training coordinators in providing a summary of trainees' feedback written in languages other than English.

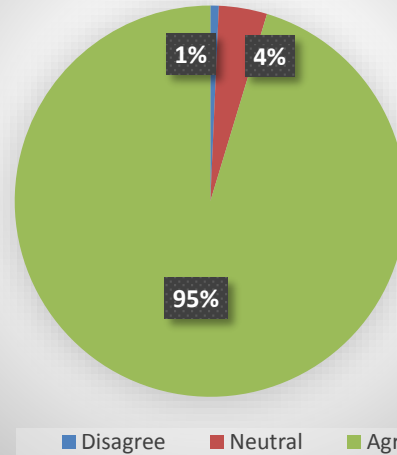
The services of the consultant as an in-house translator and interpreter were retained until December 2014. During that period however, there were lapses in the consultancy due to the fact that the short term contracts would not be renewed on time and the consultant would be forced to take a break in service at the most inopportune time. Such lapses in service would, as seen in the preceding chapter, result in lower satisfaction ratings by the trainees.

An analysis of the feedback from the trainees with regards to the positive impact of interpreting and translation on their understanding of the training subject matters, their participation during training and interaction with the trainers reveals a decidedly positive impact on the effectiveness of the measures put in place by UNSOA TS during the period April 2012 to December 2014 as illustrated by the graphical representations of the trainees' feedback below (percentages averaged across the period under study)

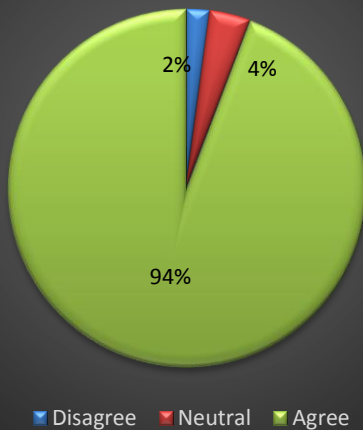
Availability of translated documents improved trainees' understanding - PDT (Average Percentages)



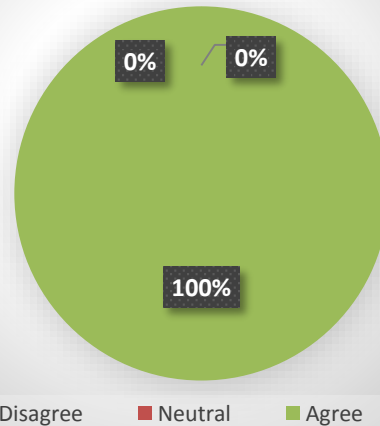
Availability of translated documents improved trainees' understanding - UNLOG (Average percentages)



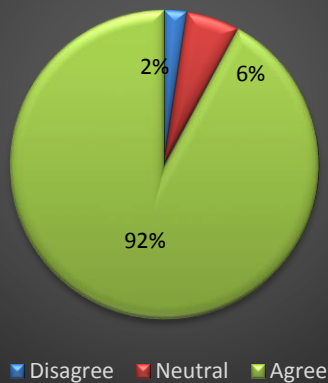
Interpreting services improved trainees' understanding - PDT (Average Percentages)



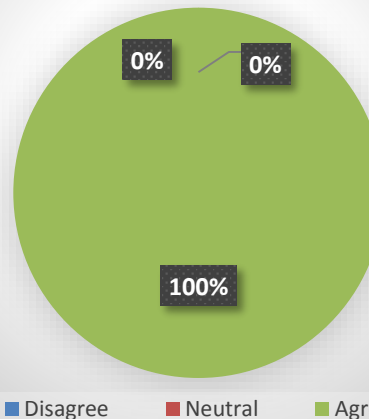
Interpreting services improved trainees' understanding - UNLOG (Average percentages)



The use of Simultaneous Interpreting Services encouraged trainees' participation during the training - PDT (Average Percentages)

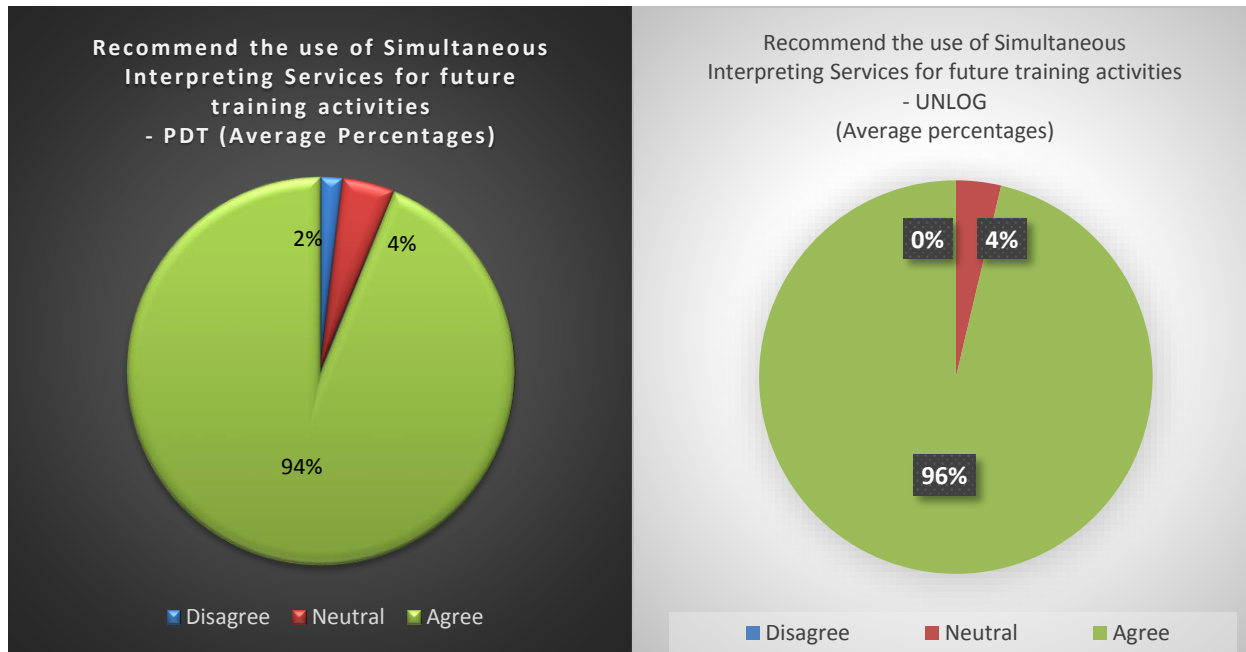


The use of Simultaneous Interpreting Services encouraged trainees' participation during the training - UNLOG (Average percentages)

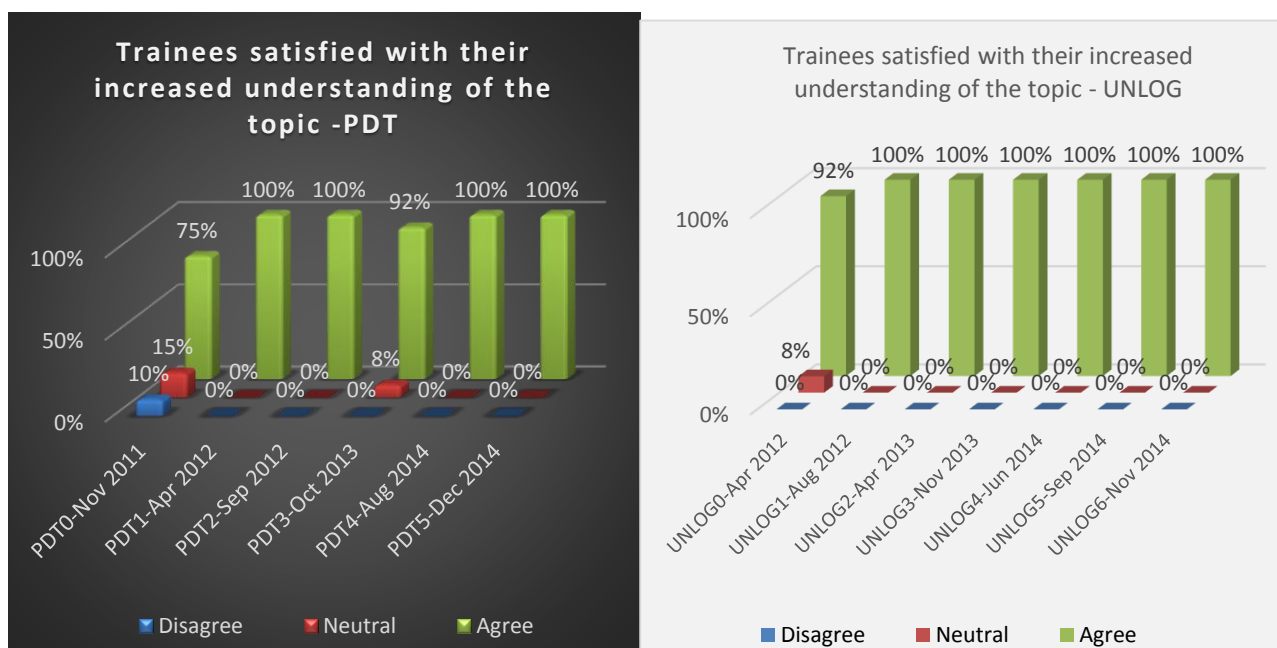


4.3 Impact of interpreting on training goals realisation

In addition, collected data and subsequent data analysis indicate that an overwhelming majority of the trainees recommended the provision of simultaneous interpreting during training activities.



A close analysis of the satisfaction level of the trainees with the increased understanding of the topics presented in the training activities also indicates that trainees who benefited from interpreting services were more satisfied than those who did not (from 75% to 100% in most PDT and 92% to 100% in UNLOG).



4.4 Summary

The findings show that language services (particularly interpreting services) impact considerably the effectiveness of UNSOA training activities for AMISOM personnel given that:

- When interpreting was not available, it was requested by, on average, 40% of the trainees
- When it was available, 90% of the trainees on average recognised that it helped them understand the various subjects covered in the training and interact with the trainers,
- On average 97% of the trainees requested interpretation services, particularly when the training was delivered in the TCC,
- The rate of satisfaction with the course effectiveness was higher when simultaneous interpreting was available,
- The percentages of feedback written in languages other than English (86% in PDT and 42% in UNLOG) indicate that trainees would readily share their point of view, comments and suggestions in their official language rather than in English and this in turn highlights the need of in-house interpreting and translation services at UNSOA to ensure a two-way communication between the trainees and those developing, coordinating and delivering the training.

This is to be expected given the conceptual framework that identifies language as an obstacle to intercultural communication. Interpreting helps to remove that obstacle by allowing each category: trainees and trainers to communicate in the language they are comfortable with while bridging the language gap; thus ensuring that effective intercultural communication takes place and training objectives are fulfilled.

This was eloquently summarised by three trainers in their answer to the question on the impact of interpreting on the training activities (Table 14, Q3):

- i. Interpreting/translating bridges the language gap. Without that it would be impossible for most trainers to train troops who do not ordinarily use English in their daily activities. The translation makes it possible for more AMISOM troops to be trained by subject matter experts
- ii. It added a lot of value to UNSOA training activities as the services helped in building capacity for AMISOM.
- iii. Effective communication, reflects professionalism and ensures that the values of the UN are understood. Trainees; most of whom are serving the UN for the first time; benefit from a clear understanding of what is involved when addressed in their own language.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study confirm the research hypotheses stipulated in 1.4 in that they clearly show that the realisation of training objectives was hindered by the language gap, a fact that was recognised by UNSOA TS. It was also echoed and reinforced by the observation that was made in the OIOS Audit Report on UNSOA Training Programmes in support of AMISOM; which in June 2011 noted that, between May 2009 and March 2011, while the troop ratio for Ugandan and Burundian contingents was 49:51; the training ratio was disproportionate at 70:30 in core subject courses and 100:0 in important areas such as mobile and radio communications. The report attributed this state of affairs to “UNSOA’s inability to provide the training in French” (OIOS, June 2011). UNSOA TS then hired the services of a consultant who would provide in-house language support services: interpreting and translation.

This solution was effective in addressing the issue but only to an extent as the services of the said consultant were often interrupted by a delay in renewing the service contract, which affected the smooth running of training activities carried out in multicultural, multilingual contexts. This in turn affected the quality of the training delivery and the satisfaction of the trainees’ expectations as clearly reflected in their feedback (Sections 4.2 and 4.3). The solution was however effective when the consultant was on duty and free to deliver the services without undue interruption caused by administrative red tape in the hiring department at UNSOA.

This study has shown that interpreting plays a key role in the training of AMISOM peacekeepers as it ensures that training subjects are effectively communicated in a multicultural environment in which the potential obstacle of language gaps is effectively removed by the use of experienced and trained interpreters,

Trainees and trainers both attested to this fact and requested that interpreting –and translation – services always be offered in support of all the training activities happening in a multicultural encounter.

It is therefore recommended that UNSOA TS seeks to expand its internal capacity to provide language support services to its training activities by hiring on permanent basis a qualified language professional who can not only provide translation and interpretation services but also supervise a team of language specialists – interpreters and translators - providing additional support as needed and to ensure that training material are current and relevant at the time of training through regular updates.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: Map of Somalia



Somalia

★

Capital:	Mogadishu
Population:	9.8 Million (est.)
Land Area:	627,337 sqkm
Maritime claims:	200 nm
Borders:	Djibouti 58 km, Ethiopia 1600 km, Kenya 682 km
Coastline:	3025 km
Highest point:	Shimbiris 2 416 m
Time Zone:	GMT + 3 hr
Internet Country Code:	.so
Independance:	1 July 1960
Airports:	59: 7 paved, 52 unpaved
Roads:	22 100 km: 2 608 km paved, 19 492 km unpaved
Ports:	3: Mogadishu, Berbera, Kismaayo

La Somalie

Capital:	Mogadishu
Population:	9.8 Millions (est.)
Superficie:	627,337 km carré
Prétentions Maritime :	200 nm
Frontières:	Djibouti 58 km, Ethiopia 1600 km, Kenya 682 km
Zone côtière:	3025 km
Le point le plus élevé:	Shimbiris 2416 m
Fuseau horaire:	GMT + 3 hr
Code Pays sur internet:	.so
Independance:	1 juillet 1960
Aéroports:	59: 7 pavés, 52 non-pavés
Routes:	22 100 km: 2 608 km pavés, 19 492 km non-pavés
Ports:	3: Mogadishu, Berbera, Kismaayo

Annex 2: Training Evaluation Forms Template



UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT OFFICE FOR AMISOM (UNSOA)

Training Evaluation Form

We are interested in your assessment of the training provided and would like to ask you to complete the form. For each statement, please check if you agree or disagree using a rating scale from "1" to "5". A rating of "1" indicates that you **strongly disagree** with the statement and a rating of "5" indicates that you **strongly agree** and "3" indicates you neither **Agree nor Disagree**.

Please write here, the training activity that you participated in: _____

Please write here your country: _____ Date: _____

Please TICK your rank indicated here below:

Officer Warrant Officer Non-Commission Officer Junior Ranks

Categories	Tick your response					
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5
Preparation						
The invitation for the training stated the goals clearly						
I was given enough information to prepare for the training						
Content Delivery						
The goals of the training were clearly defined						
The topics covered were relevant						
Each session stated the objectives clearly						
There was sufficient opportunity for interactive participation						
The training was too technical and difficult to understand						
The training experience will be useful in my work						
I got most of my questions answered during the training						
The materials were pitched at the right level						
The materials for the training were helpful						
The schedule for the training provided sufficient time to cover all of the proposed activities						
The handouts provided were helpful and included advice or details on how I can follow up on any technical issues after I am deployed to the AMISOM mission.						

The training and materials issues provided me with satisfactory knowledge and guidance on the management and accounting for the equipment we will be using in the AMISOM mission.					
Facilitator					
The facilitators were knowledgeable about the topic					
The facilitators were well prepared for the session					
The facilitators encouraged active participation					
The facilitators answered questions in a complete and clear manner					
The facilitators were respectful of the different skills and values presented by the participants					
The facilitators ensured I knew how to follow up on any technical issues once deployed to the AMISOM mission.					
Facility					
The meeting room and related facilities provided a comfortable setting for the training					
The tools and equipments during the sessions worked well					
The sessions lasted about the right amount of time					
Translation & Interpretation					
The documents were well translated					
The availability of documents in French helped in understanding the subject matter better					
The interpreting services were of good quality and helped in better understanding the subject matter					
The use of simultaneous interpreting encouraged my participation and interaction with the instructors					
I would recommend the use of translation and interpretation services for future training					
General Satisfaction					
The goals of the training have been met					
I am satisfied with my increased understanding of the topic					
I was generally very satisfied with all aspects of this training event					
I understand how to keep in contact with technical professionals after the training					
I plan to share the knowledge and skills I received during the training with other colleagues in the AMISOM mission or my own country.					

How could this training activity be improved and any other comments or observation?

Annex 3: Compilation Table for Trainees' Evaluation Forms


UN Mandatory Training - AMISOM BDI - 20/04/2012- Level 1 Ev Form Recommendations										
Number of trainees										39
Questionnaire categories										
Interpretation/Traduction	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00		Disagree	Neutral	Agree	
The documents were well translated			4	16	19	39	0%	10%	90%	100%
	0%	0%	10%	41%	49%	100%	3%	5%	92%	100%
The availability of documents in French helped in understanding the subject matter better		1	2	17	19	39	0%	3%	97%	100%
	0%	3%	5%	44%	49%	100%	0%	3%	97%	100%
The interpreting services were of good quality and helped in better understanding the subject matter			1	13	25	39	0%	5%	95%	100%
	0%	0%	3%	33%	64%	100%	13%	15%	72%	100%
The use of simultaneous interpreting encouraged my participation and interaction with the instructors			1	10	28	39				
	0%	0%	3%	26%	72%	100%	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	
I would recommend the use of translation and interpretation services for future training			2	8	29	39	0%	0%	100%	100%
	0%	0%	5%	21%	74%	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%
The handouts provided were helpful and included advice or details on how I can follow up on any technical issues after I am deployed to the AMISOM mission	1	4	6	9	19	39	0%	0%	100%	100%
	3%	10%	15%	23%	49%	100%				
Overall appreciation										
The goals of the training have been met			2	22	15	39				
	0%	0%	5%	56%	38%	100%				
I am satisfied with my increased understanding of the topic				12	27	39				
	0%	0%	0%	31%	69%	100%				
I plan to share the knowledge and skills I received during the training with other colleagues in the AMISOM mission or my own country				4	35	39				
	0%	0%	0%	10%	90%	100%				
Additional Comments										
Request of documents in French or Local language					13	33%				
Comments in English					1	3%				
Comments in French					34	87%				
Comments in Kirundi					3	8%				
Additional positive comments on interpretation					2	5%				

Annex 4: Questionnaire for Trainers and SMEs' Evaluation

Edit this survey

Questionnaire for Trainers Involved in UNSOA Training Activities for AMISOM
 This questionnaire aims to collect trainers' views on the impact of interpreting services on UNSOA training activities for AMISOM Personnel.

Done

Powered by
 SurveyMonkey
 See how easy it is to create a survey.

1. Have you trained AMISOM Personnel in a multicultural, multilingual setting in which some participants' language of choice was not English?

Yes
 No

Which training activity (DOT, UN Logistics...) Please name a couple

2. In cases when interpreting services were offered, how would you rate their impact on your training, most specifically the realisation of your training objectives?

Very positive
 Positive
 Neutral
 Negative
 Very negative

Kindly explain your answer

3. How would you rate your interaction with the trainees in a multicultural setting when interpreting is offered compared to when it is not?

Much better
 Better
 Same
 Worse
 Much worse

4. Would you say that the availability of in-house translation and interpretation services within UNSOA had an impact on your training activity with AMISOM personnel?

Very positive
 Positive
 Neutral
 Negative
 Very negative

Kindly explain

5. How likely is it that you would recommend Interpreting Services in training activities in a multicultural plurilingual setting to a friend or colleague?

Not at all likely
 1
 2
 3
 4
 5
 6
 7
 8
 9
 10
 Extremely likely

6. In your own words and based on your experience, what added value does interpreting bring to UNSOA training activities for AMISOM, if any?