



Translating the world into words...





HOW TO ENSURE THE HIGHEST QUALITY LOCALIZATION ON TRANSLATIONS

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I. PRE-PROCESSING

To achieve the highest linguistic quality possible in the LOCALIZATION process, our clients are requested to provide us with information (Needs Analysis format) about the document prior to commencing with the translation process including:

- Person responsible for creating document
- Purpose of the documentation (review, educational, advertising, support, background information . . .)
- Intended audience (Novice, Sophisticated, Experienced, Educated, conservative . . .)
- In-country officer contact for consulting purposes on glossary / terminology development.
- Target country officer for proofreading purposes.
- Any existing translations

Once this information has been gathered, we strongly recommend that the following items be developed:

- A style guideline,
- A glossary in the source language, and
- A terminology list in the target language.

Guidelines, glossaries, and / or terminology lists ensure consistency in the translation over all components of the localized product.

A. What are style guidelines?

Style guidelines, or style sheets, are a list of specific "rules" the linguist can follow during the translation process. They are either provided by the client or are developed by the linguist in conjunction with the client.



Guidelines typically address the following issues:

- Tone of the localized documentation,
- Those terms that are translated, and those that are not,
- Rules for capitalization and accent marks,
- Translation of titles and subtitles,
- Conversion of measurements,
- Rules for spelling numbers,
- Use of abbreviations, and
- Punctuation rules.

The list is then distributed to the linguists working on your job to ensure translation consistency across all product components. To compile a terminology list or a major glossary complete with definitions, is time and money well spent and the payoff is consistent use of terminology from one translation project to the next.

Facilitating an opportunity for discussion between the technical writer and the in-country / target country client's officer means that cultural and other country-specific issues can be addressed early in the project, making the translation process more effective and efficient. Style guidelines are developed based upon consensus among the in-country / target-country and Spanish Word Associates. Style guidelines help to create documents appropriate for the end user, and for meeting company and country standards as well as for maintaining geographic and cultural suitability.

B. What is a glossary?

A glossary is a list of words in the source language in which difficult or technical, product-specific terms are explained. Typically, the glossary is developed by the technical writers and software engineers (web sites) working on your specific project. The glossary is then used by the linguists working on the project to ensure that the right translation is chosen for each of these specialized terms.



C. What is a terminology list?

A terminology list is an agreed-upon list of terms, in the target language, to be used in the localization process. It ensures:

- That the translator, copy editor, and proofreader all use the same, industry-specific terminology throughout the project and over all project components,
- Consistency of abbreviations, product names, non-translated terms, and measurements,
- Consistency between country and company standards,
- Locale suitability, and
- Consensus among client, distributor, and localization provider.

The terminology list is based on:

- The product-specific glossary developed by the technical writer of the source document,
- The already localized user interface terminology of major software developers (e.g. Microsoft) and available target country dictionaries.
- Software and documentation that the client previously localized, and
- All other localized resource materials such as marketing collateral, product lists, as well as company and country standards. Company standards include part numbers, technical and product support information, warranties, license agreements, copy rights, references to other software, product names, brand names, and non-translated terms. Country standards are ways of expressing functional or cultural dictates, such as publishing standards, sorting of lists, abbreviations, time, dates, holidays, currency, and measurements.



D. Who establishes, updates, and validates the terminology list?

The lead linguist assigned to your project develops the terminology list. The linguist gathers all resource materials and consults, as needed, with product developers to obtain explanations of any ambiguous terms (this may be facilitated by your in-country / target country key officers). The lead linguist also updates and validates the list systematically throughout the localization process. The terminology list is then used by each of the linguists during the translation phase. If any additions, deletions, or modification of the terminology list are suggested, they are funneled back to the lead linguist for verification.

By keeping the clients target market in mind, when developing their content, we avoid using slang terms and culturally biased graphics. Slang is difficult to translate and understand in a foreign context. Similarly, graphics can have a cultural bias that is difficult to understand.

When using an acronym in the source documentation, SWA linguists write out its meaning when it first appears in the document. When translating, the first use of the acronym is defined/translated in the target language, even if the acronym remains in its English form throughout the document. Monitor your word



II. PROCESSING

Our localization project manager will keep you informed of the status of your project via e-mail, phone, or fax based on your requested method and frequency.

The art of translation is complex. An experienced translator can extract the essential information from the source material, including register (tone, style, formality, complexity, etc.) and carry it over to the target language translation. Quality of localization is directly linked to the translator's experience with the topic and knowledge of both the source and target languages.

Our translators provide native-quality translations. Native quality means that the material, once translated, reads as though it was originally written in the target language. This usually requires the expertise of someone who was raised and educated in the target country. Of course, there are non-native translators with exceptional education, training, and experience in a specific language that are able to provide native-quality work, but it takes true talent.

At SWA our translators have:

- Native fluency in the source language,
- A thorough understanding of the target language,
- Excellent writing skills, including a grammatical mastery of the target language and knowledge of various writing forms and styles,
- Familiarity with current terminology in the desired field (experienced translators often find it helpful to maintain extensive reference libraries),
- A working knowledge of the localization process,
- Access to appropriate tools such as up-to-date computers and multiple software applications, and
- An awareness of cultural differences and language subtleties. Our translators have extensive education. Technical translators require additional experience in order to work in specific fields.



Using qualified translators is integral to the success of your localization project. Quality translators infuse your products with a professional style and clarity of content that contributes to the success of your international release. In order to ensure high quality, the linguistic phase of the project should normally include three steps:

- Translation,
- Copy editing, and
- Proofreading.

The translator is the “lead linguist” on your project and is responsible for converting the source material content into the target language. The copy editor then reviews, word for word, the translator’s work, verifying the accuracy of the translation. Finally, the proofreader examines the final version for consistency and flow of the language. If you just need your content understood in the target language, you may be able to use translation, or translation followed by either copy editing or proofreading. This approach is particularly useful for internal documents (say, training materials for your new multinational accounting system).

A. Translation

At this stage, in accordance with the specific guidelines produced in the Analysis phase, our translators focus on their craft by rendering a product in the specific target language(s) of the project. The goal, of course, is to absolutely avoid literal word for word translation, and instead create a piece of writing, which reads as though it were originally written in the target language itself. Equally important in this process is the ability to maintain consistency. This is greatly enhanced by the use of Computer-Assisted Technology.



The basic process is as follows: as a translator goes about his or her business, every sentence and or phrase translated is stored in a bilingual database. For every subsequent reoccurrence of a particular sentence, or in most cases, a sentence fragment, the translator is automatically provided with the translation stored in memory. The translator can then choose to accept this translation if it is a 100% match or edit it in such a way that renders it acceptable. As one might have already guessed, this greatly reduces time spent on repeated content and ensures that the terminology will be consistent throughout an entire document and in any related documentation translated at a later date.

B. Copy Editing

Following translation, files are then submitted to an editor. The job of the editor is to ensure that the content has in fact been translated accurately and that the quality is acceptable. This is done by comparing the translated text to the original English line by line, all the while keeping in mind that correct rules of grammar and syntax have been followed. Equally important is the editor's task of making sure terminology is correct and consistent within the documents and that client-approved glossary terms are utilized. Since larger projects can often involve more than one translator, the editing stage is especially critical since it requires the meshing of individual writing styles to create a smooth and flowing document.

C. Proofreading

This is the third and final stage of the translation process. At this juncture a third party linguist evaluates the translated and edited content for grammar, style, professional readability, and again consistency, (from both a terminological and cultural standpoint). Since the proofreader should by this point have a quality product in hand the main goal here is not to employ the line by line scrutiny of the editor, but to assess the overall flow of the document, keeping in mind the intention that it should read as if originally written in the target language itself. Once this is done and any final finishing touches are made, the files are then given back to the translator, who will then, in turn, update the Computer-assisted database based on any changes made.



III. COMMUNICATION

Communication is the cornerstone of a successful project. In translation and localization work, our project manager will be responsible of communicating any needs between you and the translation and localization team working on the project and similarly communicate issues the localization team has back to you and your colleagues. Typically, representatives from both sides (the client and the provider) work together throughout the project, with the localization project manager (PM) serving as the main conduit of communication.

A typical localization team includes key contact(s) person(s) for the client, an in-country reviewer who can answer questions about the technical specifications discussed in your source document and a target-country contact who can offer advice on the terminology and style, and a technical expert. On the localization provider side, the PM coordinates project resources, including engineers, desktop publishers, quality assurance specialists, and linguists. Any issues encountered by these resources are funneled back to the client by PM for resolution.



III. POST-PROCESSING

A. Visual review

Once the formal translation process has come to an end, the Quality Assurance process continues, in different forms (depending on the nature of your project). If your project includes printed materials, the QA reviewers perform visual validation to insure that everything in the translated document matches the original English text (source document). The QA reviewer validates items such as:

- Completed translation (all items that should be translated are translated and those that should remain in the source language are not translated),
- Consistent font type, style, and size,
- Correct placement and size of graphics,
- Graphic content (making sure there is no clipping of graphic or text elements),
- Page flow and page numbering,
- Cross-references between text and the table of contents and indices, and
- Text indentation and alignment.

B. Text Reintegration & Formatting of Localized Product

Once the entire amount of content has passed through all stages of translation and client approval has been attained through the submission of sample portions of text, files are then reintegrated, if necessary, back into their original format and the final localized product is built. Layout, graphics, localization issues specified in the Analysis stage, and all other elements set out in the initial guidelines are addressed so as to produce a finished product in the specific target language(s).

C. Final QA: Linguistic and Technical

With the final localized product complete, one last round of linguistic inspection is conducted to ensure that the translated content is error-free. All technical testing is carried out as well. The type of testing is determined by the project scope and will have already been determined in the Analysis phase



D. Delivery to Client

Upon completion of the final inspection process, the localized product is then delivered to the client for review and approval. Method of delivery may vary depending on client requirements. Generally, smaller projects are delivered "zipped" via email, while larger projects are transferred via our FTP site, or delivered on CD-ROM.

E. Client Approval

Once receipt of final files is confirmed, our clients then have a designated amount of time to conduct an internal linguistic and technical review. The duration of this review period depends on the size and nature of the project and will have already been stated and agreed to in the service contract. Any technical or linguistic adjustments deemed necessary by the client and within the original scope of work are to be implemented by Spanish Word Associates Translations free of charge, thus ensuring 100% client satisfaction.