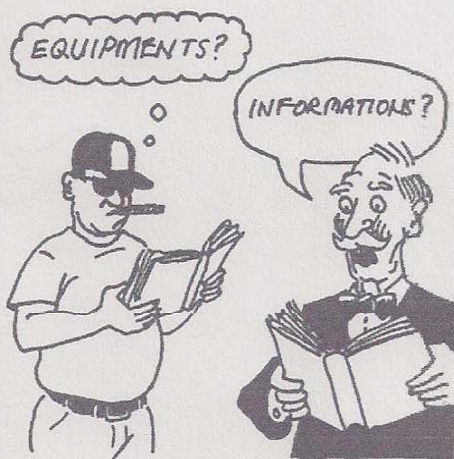


9. Always show page proofs to your translation provider

Many a catastrophe could be avoided by having your translation provider read page proofs before you go to press or look at your website before it is launched. For one thing, typographical conventions vary widely from one country to the next and more often than not local typesetters change texts to respect local conventions. (For example, colons invariably pick up a space before them—as incorrect in English as is a comma acting as a decimal separator in a number like 10.5). Furthermore, English versions of programmes such as Quark Xpress cut non-English words in the wrong places.

This final verification is doubly important if even a single word of a translation has been changed.



Watch out for errors, deceptive cognates and mistranslations!

Just before its new catalogue went to print, a French consumer electronics company's staff 'corrected' the English translation.

They added an 's' to information and equipment (after all, they reasoned, there was more than one), changed 'employees' to 'collaborators' (unaware of its negative connotation in English) and so on.

*Now they are waiting for those 100,000 *Français* catalogues to go out of circulation.*

10. Translation is the job of a native speaker

You may speak another language fluently, but if you're not a native speaker your efforts will almost invariably wind up sounding foreign.



Penny wise and pound foolish

One of France's top companies launched its international rebranding campaign with full-page advertisements in all the major English-language newspapers—to the tune of over £11 million. The highest levels of the company were involved in the wording of the ad; even the French CEO had a hand in it. The result? They saved less than £70 by not outsourcing the translation and their expensive campaign made them a laughing-stock.

11. Answer your translator's questions

You can be sure that if a translator has queries, the quality of your translation will be greatly enhanced if you answer them promptly.

Also, questions can afford you a further opportunity to improve your original text: probably no one will ever look at your text as closely as a translator will. If there are errors, inconsistencies, incomprehensible abbreviations, etc., a good translator will point these out to you.



A dissection lesson

A translator's questioning of the numerous abbreviations on a B2B website (abbreviations understood only by internal staff) led a large service company to rewrite the source language of the site, making it accessible to a wider range of potential business customers.

12. And finally don't keep it to yourself

If you have any photos or diagrams that would help your translator, by all means share them! Likewise any relevant documentation, glossaries or websites: the translator can use these invaluable resources to ensure harmony with your internal terminology. Do not forget to provide any previous translations, especially if they appear alongside the new translation.



I need the brochure for 1923

A leading video game publisher did not think to brief the translator of their press kit on the hero's name as it actually appeared in the English and Spanish versions of their game. On launch day the journalists were presented with different names for the same character!

The examples above demonstrate how many things can go wrong with a 'simple' translation. We hope our guidelines will help you ensure the success of your translations.

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- Translation into 50 languages
 - Interpreting
- Desktop Publishing
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APPENDIX 5: Alongside the Seine

5.1 The Pont Neuf



5.2 The Pont Alexandre III



5.3 The Eiffel Tower



5.4 The courtyard of the Louvre Museum



5.5 The façade of Notre Dame



5.6 A metro station



5.7 A sidewalk cafe



5.8 The Seine vendors

