

Writing for Translation



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1. Introduction

1.1 Who does your translations?

- “Ideal translator”
- Translator selection, qualifications, certification
- Native vs. non-native translation
- Large agency vs. direct contact

1.2 Who will read the translation?

- Newcomers may need spelled-out explanations
- Highly experienced readers may appreciate conciseness

1.3 How are translations done?

Human Translation (HT)



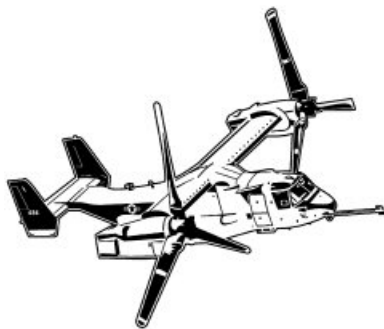
Still done, but increasingly out of place

Translation memory (TM)



Current state-of-the-art for technical translation, preferred by translators

Free Machine Translation (MT)



e.g. Google
Fast but hard to manage

Customized Machine Translation



fast and good
best with restricted or “controlled” writing
can be expensive

1.4 What is translation memory?

- Databases – pairs of translated sentences, phrases, and terms
- Software – examines database, seeks sentences that match
- “Fuzzy” vs. “Exact matches”
- ✓ Speed / Consistency / Multiple users / QA checks
- ✗ Training / investment / Quality of databases

2. Planning for translation quality

2.1 Achieving consistency

- Hire same translators and agency
- Maintain a glossary and enforce its use
- Establish style guide – how to handle translation situations, acronyms and abbreviations, unit conversions
- Use in-house translators
- Provide / encourage use of translation memory

2.2 Tell your translators what the text is for

- Audience - well-informed or novice?
- Quick-and-dirty or publication quality?
- Are formatting and appearance important?

Effort and time spent – to resolve terminology questions, fix formatting – will vary.

2.3 Plan for communication

- The translator is your last reviewer. An inquisitive translator is good news. *“Their critical eye helps identify weak spots in the original.”* (ATA)
- Send notes and explanations to translator
- Respond to translator questions

3. Before translating

Good writing is easier to translate.

3.1 Shorten, shorten, shorten

- Look at every word in a sentence, and decide whether it is vital to the meaning. Is it repeated somewhere else in the paragraph or section? Cut what's not needed.
- Set a goal, such as: Eliminate one third of the words.

3.2 BUT – don't cut essential words

Native English speakers are able to fill in the blanks and fully understand — not so when the reader is a translation engine or a non-native English speaker.

3.3 Don't be too creative

Reuse standard phrases. This enables reuse by the TM program, and makes your writing understood more quickly.

3.4 Know your tool

- Microsoft Word?:
 - Don't spend too much time on formatting
 - Be sure and spend enough time
- Make document “robust”; can accommodate changes in text length without “breaking”

3.5 Don't break a sentence or phrase into separate elements.

This can happen in a text box or table cell. The TM program may prevent the translator from recognizing that the two elements are actually part of one sentence.

Example:

HYDRAULIC
CONNECTOR

Incorrect translation using TM:

HIDRÁULICO
CONECTOR

Better:

combine the cells into one
before translation:

HYDRAULIC CONNECTOR

3.6 Put abbreviations and acronyms in tables

Source language document:

Term	Definition
FE	Finite Element
ID	Inside Diameter
OD	Outside Diameter
OOS	Out of Straightness

Possible translation:

Término	Inglés	Definición
FE	<i>Finite Element</i>	Elemento finito
ID	<i>Inside Diameter</i>	Diámetro interior
OD	<i>Outside Diameter</i>	Diámetro exterior
OOS	<i>Out of Straightness</i>	Fuera de rectitud (desalineación)

3.7 Leave space for expansion

A translation rarely occupies the same amount of space as the original. Spanish text often takes 15-20% more characters than its English equivalent. Many individual words have more letters. Allow room for the text to “expand”.

3.8 How to handle graphics

Options:

- Include “editable” versions of charts, graphs, figures
- Instruct translator to insert two-column glossary

3.9 Finalize text before starting the translation

One exception:

Scenario:

- Technical writer finishes 80 page document on Monday.
- Sends to reviewer. Changes are minor.
- Final document given to translator on Thursday.

Translator must finish 80 pages on weekend!!

Solution:

- Start translating draft version on Monday.
- Sentence pairs (source and translation) will be added to translation memory.

When translator receives final version, remaining translation will go quickly.

3.10 Plan for proof-readability

- Avoid solid blocks of text
- Add explanatory subheadings.
- Short paragraphs, one idea each

Método de Trabajo

EL método para realizar esta cementación es comúnmente aquel que usa un juego de tapones y cabeza de cementación, El equipo de flotación utilizado es zapato guía y collar flotador convencionales, y con el respectivo juego de Tapones sólido y de diafragma. La distancia entre zapato y collar es normalmente de dos juntas de tubería. El equipo de flotación es perforable con barrena PDC para poder continuar la operación de perforación en breve. En algunos casos se puede usar el sistema con tubería interna y acoplamiento especial al collar flotador, para reducir el exceso de cemento de retorno a superficie, en caso de que la presión diferencial al final de la cementación entre el anular y fluido al interior de la tubería de revestimiento sea muy alta, y se acerque a la presión de colapso, se realizan modificaciones al método de tubería interna, por medio de un empaque en superficie usado para dar sello entre la tubería de revestimiento y la tubería interna, por medio del cual se puede aplicar presión en dicho anular, y de esta forma contrarrestar los efectos de colapso por la presión diferencial aplicada al final de la cementación, adicionalmente en este caso se colocan unos tramos de tubería de fibra adelante de la tubería interna, ya que la conexión y desconexión del empaque de superficie toma un tiempo considerable y se utiliza como precaución para el caso de que cualquier exceso de cemento que faltare por desplazar pudiera atrapar a la tubería.

Generalidades de Diseño

Este tipo de trabajo ofrece un completo aislamiento anular desde la Zapata de la tubería de revestimiento hasta superficie, usando dos lechadas: una lechada de relleno que normalmente es de 1.60 gr/cc y va a superficie, y otra lechada de 1.90 gr/cc que cubre un intervalo de 200 a 300 mts desde la zapata, para brindar un buen sello hidráulico y el soporte necesario para operaciones de colgamiento y corte de la tubería de revestimiento, así como un adecuado sello hidráulico para realizar la prueba de goteo o pruebas de integridad de formación. Para calcular un estimativo inicial del tamaño del agujero, usualmente se parte del diámetro de la barrena y se adiciona 30-40 % de exceso sobre el volumen anular entre el diámetro de barrena y la tubería de revestimiento de superficie. Algunas veces se realizan pruebas de tiempo de atraso que ayudan a predecir el tamaño del agujero. En caso de tener un registro de Caliper, se usara el tamaño de agujero del registro.

La centralización solo será un factor crítico en la región de la zapata, traslape entre tuberías de revestimiento y en la cabeza del pozo para posteriores operaciones de montaje de equipo de superficie. Se utilizan centralizadores de Flejes para obtener 70% de stand off recomendado. Una vez se llegue a fondo es recomendado instalar la cabeza de cementación y conectar las líneas en "Y", para comenzar a circular con las bombas del equipo, de esta manera no es necesario realizar conexiones más adelante, disminuyendo al máximo el tiempo estático durante la cementación. La circulación del pozo se realiza al máximo caudal de flujo en el anular durante la caída libre del cemento, teniendo en cuenta los datos de salida del simulador de cementación Optcem. Se debe considerar al diseñar los caudales de bombeo de la cementación que no se puede exceder la máxima velocidad lineal en el anular experimentada durante la operación de perforación, por peligro de empaquetamiento durante la cementación. El lodo se deberá acondicionar durante el periodo de circulación hasta obtener valores reológicos de punto de cedencia bajos, dichos valores dependerán del Angulo de inclinación del pozo y normalmente deben estar por debajo de los valores reológicos de espaciadores y cemento. El tiempo de acondicionamiento del pozo con la Tubería de Revestimiento en fondo deberá ser como mínimo dos fondos arriba. Esta sección es convencionalmente perforada con lodo base agua, por consiguiente, se recomienda el bombeo del volumen necesario de acuerdo a simulación de pre flujo disperso y turbulento. En la eventualidad de registrar pérdidas durante la perforación, se bombeará un tren de fluidos que permitan minimizarlas durante la cementación. Este tren de fluidos está basado en las características de las pérdidas (parciales ó totales). En circunstancias críticas, se bombeará un bache disperso adelante, seguido por el sistema de control de pérdidas base silicato, luego un espaciador y por ultimo la lechada de cemento. Los volúmenes de fluidos y espaciadores deben ser evaluados de acuerdo al tamaño de agujero dichos volúmenes dependerán del ECD obtenido durante la

4. Specific advice

4.1 Avoid excess jargon

- Translators and readers may not be experts.
- Don't assume they know industry-specific knowledge.
- Example: Military “secure”

4.2 Keep sentences short

Avoid:

- long distances between nouns and modifiers
- long complex clauses
- comma splices.

Some references suggest average of 25 words (SPE).

4.3 Be logical, precise, and literal

- ✗ The report compares the salaries of different departments
 - ✓ The report compares salaries of employees in different departments.
-
- ✗ The system shall include a weak-link mechanism that fails to ensure that the equipment is not damaged.

4.4 Use singular and plural forms correctly

- ✗ Return the machines to their original position
- ✓ Return each machine to its original position

4.5 Don't overload your sentences

Actual examples:

“Elicitation sessions with subject matter experts were conducted to determine uncertainty variances surrounding baseline schedule activity durations and cost element estimated amounts.”



4.6 Use unambiguous date formats

✗ 02/11/14

✓ 11-Feb-2014

4.7 Keep text simple

Sometimes, words such as “**perform**” “**provide**”, “**allow**”, “**permit**”, “**enable**” can be deleted.

- ✗ A program provides encryption of user ID’s
- ✓ A program encrypts user ID’s

perform the alignment

align

reach agreement

agree

come to a conclusion

conclude

make a decision

decide

provide an explanation

explain

conduct an investigation

investigate

4.8 Clarify noun phrases

- ✗ dead celebrity seekers
- ✓ dead-celebrity seekers

- ✗ complex instrument system
- ✓ complex-instrument system (system of complex instruments)
- ✓ complex system of instruments

- ? Buried cable engineer

4.9 Avoid words with multiple meanings

- ✗ “outstanding” – Does this mean “excellent” or “missing”?
- ✗ “inflammable” – does this mean the opposite of “flammable”?
- ✗ “bimonthly” – “every two months” or “twice a month”

4.10 Use complete sentences to introduce lists.

Don't let the items in the list “complete” the sentence.

✗ The alarm system will:

- activate audible warnings
- send a signal to the remote monitoring station

In English, the future tense has two words: “will activate”

In many languages, these cannot be split.

✓ The alarm system will do the following:

- activate audible warnings
- send a signal to the remote monitoring station

4.11 Place conjunctive adverbs at the beginning of a sentence

- ✗ There will, however, be an extra charge for excessive consumption
- ✓ However, there will be an excess charge for excessive consumption

4.12 Clarify ambiguous pairs of nouns

To make meanings absolutely clear, add “syntactic clues”

- Add extra words or rearrange to clarify the meaning
 - Use parallel construction
- ✗ The cargo consists of red cars and trucks.
 - ✓ The cargo consists of red cars and red trucks.
 - ✓ The cargo consists of trucks and red cars.

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- ✗ The safety module, processing system, and printer power supplies must be replaced.
 - ✓ The safety module, the processing system, and the printer power supply must be replaced.
 - ✓ Three power supplies must be replaced: One each for the safety module, the processing system, and the printer.
-
- ✗ Add the name and point to the list.
 - ✓ Add the name and **the** point to the list.
 - ✓ Add the name and **then** point to the list.

4.13 Use words instead of symbols

- ✗ ampersands (&) – use “and”
- ✗ pound or number signs (#) – spell out or abbreviate “lb” or “No.”
- ✗ quote marks for inches (“) and feet (‘)
- ✗ fractional characters ($\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, etc.)

4.14 Avoid abbreviations, especially with periods

Most TM programs interpret periods as sentence delimiters.

Write out units, days and dates.

- “pounds” instead of “lbs”
- “kilometers” instead of “km”
- “November”, not “Nov.”

4.15 Avoid parenthetical phrases

- ✗ Hold meetings for technical clarifications (after the pumps have been sized) with the suppliers.
- ✓ After the pumps have been sized, hold meetings for technical clarifications with the suppliers

4.16 Avoid using slashes to join words

- ✗ system console/panel
- ✓ a system console or panel
- ✗ mathematical vectors/matrices
- ✓ mathematical vectors and matrices

Use slashes in established terms such as “client/server”, “and/or”, “on/off”

4.17 Avoid using “quote” as a noun.

The word “quote” can mean:

- “to quote” (offer a price)
- “to quote” (repeat or copy a group of words)
- “a quote” (an offer)

Many non-native English speakers are not familiar with the last meaning. Use “quotation” instead.

4.18 Use adverbs immediately before the words it modifies

Placing them in other locations can be confusing. Applies to:

Only, not, primarily, largely, principally, mainly, partly, and completely.

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