COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW
OF TEST ADAPTATION AND
TRANSLATION VERIFICATION PROCEDURES
IN THREE INTERNATIONAL SURVEYS

3MC Conference
Berlin - June 25-28, 2008
Comparative Overview

- efforts made in three international surveys
- to ensure that the translated/adapted instruments are equivalent across countries
- national versions depend on translation of an international source version
  ➢ high stakes process
Comparative Overview

- Because translation is a high stakes process, the organisations in charge financed rigorous assessments of translations
- to target stringent quality standards
- Procedures presented in the paper are the result of this investment and include:
  - translation and adaptation of test instruments
  - verification of the translated/adapted instruments
  - documentation of those processes
• **translation** and **adaptation** used jointly throughout the paper

  Because **Translation**: too restrictive to describe the process of culturally adjusting a test rather than literally translating it (Joldersma, 2004).

• **Verification**: checking linguistic correctness of the target version + checking equivalence of that target version against the source version.
11. Sentence Processing – Test Set #4

Soap is used for washing.  
A stranger is someone you know well.

English "stranger" is unambiguous, but in Niger "stranger" means BOTH 'guest' and 'stranger' under the cultural premise that a foreigner is first of all somebody one has to take care of. In most Niger languages there are only roundabout ways of translating "stranger", including "person-you-do-not-know". 
Suggestion for adaptation: 'A guest/stranger you meet for the first time is someone you know well'
identify practices in each phase that

- have been successfully used to detect problems in translating and adapting the instruments
- resulted in thorough documentation and
- provided good proxies for indicators of quality in translation and adaptation.
OECD/PISA 2006

PROGRAMME FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ASSESSMENT

- internationally standardized assessment
- Tests are typically administered every three years to 15-year-old students
- reading, mathematical and scientific literacy in terms of knowledge and skills needed in adult life.
TIMSS 2007 is the fourth in a cycle of internationally comparative assessments.

Carried out every four years at the fourth and eighth grades.

TIMSS provides data about trends in mathematics and science achievement over time.
LITERACY ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING PROGRAMME

• LAMP builds upon the ALL survey by measuring five levels of literacy and numeracy skills

• through a combination of household survey methods and educational assessments conducted on a 5- to 10-year cycle.

• Adult + young adult population (15 and older) not attending school
Best Practice #1

• prepare a training module for translation and adaptation of the data collection instruments that can easily be replicated

  ➢ based on concise general guidelines + specific guidelines per item

  ➢ hands-on exercises

  ➢ and checklists
EXAMPLE:
General guideline for MC item

Keep in mind the fact that the relative length of the possible responses should not, insofar as possible, change significantly across languages.
**ITEM-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES**

Question 10: Refer to the gas gauge on the opposite page to answer question 10.

The gas tank in this car holds 48 liters. About how many liters of gas remain in the tank? (Assume the gas gauge is accurate.)

- **Full**
  - May replace with letters or symbols common in country.

- **Empty**
  - Be sure to use a word comparable to ‘about’ to indicate an estimation is acceptable.

- **Do not change!**
  - May use country’s common word for ‘gas’.
  - e.g. ‘petrol’, ‘benzine’

*CapStAn CTM Linguistic Quality Control*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit/Location in unit</th>
<th>ENGLISH SOURCE</th>
<th>Verifier intervention</th>
<th>Verifier comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F10</td>
<td>10. The gas tank in this car holds 48 liters. About how many liters of gas remain in the tank? (Assume the gas gauge is accurate.)</td>
<td>Added info</td>
<td>The Hausa version reads: &quot;The tank of this car can hold 48 liters of gas. Look where the needle has stopped on the photograph of the tank in order to answer how many liters of gas remain inside?&quot; Verifier (1) removed the passage for &quot;look where the needle stopped...&quot;;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Missing info</td>
<td>(2) added the missing information (&quot;Assume that the gauge is accurate&quot;), (3) added the missing essential word for &quot;about/approximatively&quot;.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Best Practice #2

- even if the budget is limited, order (or produce) **ex ante** translation in at least one language
- and keep track of difficulties encountered.
- This will allow early detection of flaws in the source version
- and make it possible to draw translators’ attention to potential difficulties
Opinions concerning the need to consolidate the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian stock markets have been heard with increasing frequency during the past half year.

According to data published in the June edition of the Central European Economic Review (CEER), a joint Baltic stock market would split the fifth and sixth places with the Slovenian stock market in terms of market capitalization.

A joint Baltic stock market would lag behind markets such as Russia, Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. It should be noted that the stock market capitalization of any of the above countries would still be five to nine times higher than that of the joint Baltic stock market.
Best Practice #3

- item-specific instructions for translation and adaptation in a separate form.
- To be used by translators, NCs, verifiers and IPC.
- Each party is aware that other players focus on those entries >> this drives joint effort to spontaneously document issues and/or the way that they were addressed.
- Comments are centralised > translation history
Job Title: FRUIT SHOP CASUAL  
Job Code: 1033939  
Location: Brisbane, QLD, Australia  
Date: 13th July  
Job Type: Temporary / Contract

Job Description:

FRUIT SHOP Casual, Centenary Suburbs. Junior Male or Female, experience preferred. Minimum 15hrs/wk - must be available Tuesday + Wednesday 6am-2pm at minimum. Ph 0412 765 357.

**Translation Note:** Adapt place names as appropriate.

**Translation Note:** “Casual” means a job that is temporary or irregular.

**Translation Note:** Translate “Hrs/wk” using an abbreviation if one exists in your language.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stimulus</th>
<th>English version</th>
<th>National version</th>
<th>Consortium Recommendation or NC Justification</th>
<th>Verifier comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R446 JbVac</td>
<td>Brisbane, QLD, Australia Centenary suburbs Ph 0412 765 357</td>
<td>ที่อยู่โปร่งใส ทุ่งธรรมี่ อำเภอสงขลา โทร. 0 2412 7653</td>
<td>Adapt to local context</td>
<td>OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulus</td>
<td>Casual</td>
<td>ช่างราย</td>
<td>Translate as a job that is temporary or irregular</td>
<td>OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulus</td>
<td>&quot;Junior&quot; Male or Female</td>
<td>วัยรุ่นชายหรือหญิง</td>
<td>In TH, use &quot;วัยรุ่น&quot; instead of &quot;เยาวชน&quot;. It has the same meaning but &quot;เยาวชน&quot; range of age is too broad (from primary school to university).</td>
<td>&quot;Junior Male or Female&quot; Translated as &quot;Third Year Student&quot; (because in XXXXXX a third-year student is called a &quot;junior&quot;, a fourth-year student a &quot;senior&quot; etc.). In this case the verifier also checked the French source, and it is preferable to translate as &quot;young man or woman&quot;, because this job is not reserved to young people who are in education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R446Q01</td>
<td>What kind of business is offering this job?</td>
<td>สรุปจุดประสงค์ที่เสนอการจ้างงานนี้</td>
<td>Do not translate &quot;business&quot; with a word used in the stimulus (e.g. &quot;shop&quot;)</td>
<td>OK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Best Practice #4

• prompt translators (and verifiers) to react
• by using simple or dichotomous questions
• to be answered by ticking a box or selecting from a drop-down menu
• Ask all parties to regard the completed form as an integral part of the deliverables.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit/Location in unit</th>
<th>FT&gt;MS Changes [prefilled for Consortium changes]</th>
<th>Verifier intervention</th>
<th>Verifier comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Field Trial version</td>
<td>Main Study Version</td>
<td>Justification for change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$131$ Gvibr</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulus</td>
<td>100 anni</td>
<td>un secolo</td>
<td>More fluent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
USING SEVERITY CODES

Code 1: Serious error (likely to affect item functioning)

Code 2: Minor error

Code 3: Suggestion for improvement

Code 4: Acceptable adaptation

Code 1? Not sure (but could be serious)
Best Practice #5

- Inform translators and NCs that national versions will undergo quality control

- **Feedback recorded in a central monitoring tool**
  - in which NC listed problems encountered
  - and the way they addressed them.

- If possible, arrange one iteration after verification > NCs can comment on verifier interventions before going to the field.
## DOUBLE TRANSLATION FOLLOW-UP FORM

Target language: CHINESE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENGLISH SOURCE</th>
<th>CHINESE VERSIONS produced by Translator 1 and Translator 2</th>
<th>Translation difficulty levels (Translators 1 &amp; 2)</th>
<th>Comments by Translator 1 and Comments by Translator 2</th>
<th>&quot;Reconciled&quot; Chinese version</th>
<th>Reconciler Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As I got closer, I realised the voice was not human.</td>
<td>我着我靠近時，我發現那不是人的聲音。</td>
<td>STRAIGHTFORWARD</td>
<td></td>
<td>當我靠近時，我才發現那聲音不是人的。</td>
<td>The phrase &quot;the voice was not human&quot; is rendered as &quot;that is not human voice&quot; in both translations, because it is straightforward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What I saw was a fox.</td>
<td>我看到一隻狐狸。</td>
<td>STRAIGHTFORWARD</td>
<td></td>
<td>我看到的是一隻狐狸。</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I listened carefully and discovered that it was making a charanke(2), a complaint against the Ainu people.</td>
<td>我仔細聆聽，發現牠正在發出對愛努人的抗議。</td>
<td>COMPLEX</td>
<td>there's no such chinese vocabulary of &quot;charanke&quot;. Thus I invented a new word.</td>
<td>我仔細聆聽，發現牠正在作卡拉可(2)，一種針對愛努人的抗議。</td>
<td>It is difficult to convey the meaning of &quot;charanke&quot; in Chinese. Both translators just incorporated the explanation of the footnote into the translation. One solution is to compose several Chinese characters to represent the pronunciation of &quot;charanke&quot;, but most of time the composed word will not have any meaning in Chinese.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** whole paragraph within quotation marks.
cApStAn ctm
Linguistic Quality Control

THANK YOU
FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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