Advance Translation in ESS Round 5

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Overview

I. History / Background

II. Implementation in ESS 5

III. Suggestions for improvement

IV. Conclusion / Outlook

History / Background

- Idea first mentioned by **Janet Harkness** in **1995**

- Translation as '**problem-spotting tool**'
  - → Identify and indicate problems **IN ADVANCE**
  - → **Improve translatability**
  - → facilitate **cross-cultural implementation** into 25+ language versions

- **Implementation:** first time ESS Round 5

Advance Translation in ESS 5

- **2 languages**: Switzerland (French) - Poland (Polish)

- **Pilot Questionnaire**, ca. 6 months before final version

- **Questionnaire (new and modified items) subdivided (108 items):**

  Media Use (Core):   PL
  Trust in criminal justice (Rotating module):   FR
  Demographic Questions (Core / Rotating):   FR + PL
  Work, family and well-being (Rotating):   PL

- Both countries: **Team approach**

Implementation

Excel

⇨ **Comments >> Translations !!**

1. 'Problem Category' column (drop-down list)

2. 'Comments' column

Problem category
AL (Alphabet)
CI (Culturally Inappropriate)
DE (Design)
DI (Differentiation)
ID (Idiomatic Expression)
ME (Meaning)
RC (Response Categories)
GR (Grammar)
O (Other)

of unit	Source Text	Translation annotations (footnotes in word document - not to be translated)	Advance Translation 1	Problem Category	Comm
	The first few questions concern the amount of time you spend watching television, listening to the radio and reading newspapers. Please do not include the time you spend doing these activities using the internet – we will ask you about this later. We would now like to ask you two questions about your use of the internet				

No comment
Several categories
Alphabet
Culturally Inappropriate
Design
Differentiation
Grammar
Idiom

Item number / Part of question naire	Question	AT1 – Problem Categor y	AT1 - Comment	AT2 – Problem Categor y	AT2 – Comment	Review – Problem Categor y	Review - Comment	Comment / recommenda tion Brita
B	I would now like to ask you some questions about how wrong you consider	Gramm ar	English formulation using "how" (wrong) are difficult to translate briefly in french	GR	Much information in one sentence in English. The same syntactical structure	Several categori es	Much information in one sentence in English. The same syntactical	- Long sentence with much information

⇒ **Only comments forwarded –**

Translations not relevant!

Problem category	Number of occurrences in total
AL (Alphabet)	-
CI (Culturally Inappropriate)	26
DE (Design)	78
DI (Differentiation)	12
ID (Idiomatic Expression)	27
ME (Meaning)	50
RC (Response Categories)	11
GR (Grammar)	57
O (Other)	28
Several Categories	24
[NEW: CONSISTENCY]	1
[NEW: IDIOM/WORDING/PHRASEOLOGY]	13
Invalid categories mentioned (abbreviations unknown or similar)	7

Examples of changes: I. Interculturally difficult use of examples

1. INTERVIEWER NOTE: […] *'Community service refers to a sentence OTHER than a prison sentence or fine where the offender is asked to perform a task or tasks that benefit the community* **e.g. cleaning litter from the streets***'*

2. Advance Translation comment:
   "In Switzerland, community service would not normally be performed in the street or in the public space. (…)"

   In some countries, **community service is not performed in the public** – perhaps we can add another example which is less 'seen' by the public?

   3. ESS5 Final Questionnaire: Interviewer Note (D38): *'Community service refers to a sentence OTHER than a prison sentence or fine where the offender is asked to perform a task or tasks that benefit the community'*
       ⇔ **example deleted**

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Examples of changes: II. Footnotes added

1. ESS5 Pilot Questionnaire (B24):
The police in [country] generally have the same sense of right and wrong as I do.

2. AT comment:
Precise what is meant by "right and wrong"?

3. ESS5 Final Questionnaire (D21):
The police generally have the same sense of right and wrong[7] as I do.
[7] 'Sense of right and wrong' in terms of 'feeling of morally right or wrong from a personal point of view'.

Analysis

- Advance Translation comments leading to **changes** in the final questionnaire, which are **in the sense of the Advance Translation comments** (entirely or only partly in this sense): 51

- Advance Translation comments leading to **no changes** in the final questionnaire: 60

- Changes in the final questionnaire where it is **not sure** if it had been caused by the Advance Translation comments: 33

↔ **Not systematically documented by QDTs!**

Suggestions for improvement

- Stricter, clearer **documentation** of all decisions on AT comments (Excel ?)

- Adapting **Problem Categories**
  → e.g. 'ID/Idiomatic Expression' ≠ 'Wording / Idiom / Phraseology'

  → new 'Consistency'
  → new 'Grammar / Syntax'
  → better definitions

- ?? Or: omitting Problem Categories ??

- Participation of **as many cultures / language groups as possible!**

Conclusion / Outlook

Many changes made after AT

Probably avoidance of several mistakes

$\Rightarrow$ Intermediate judgement: positive!

BUT: No comparison to translation without AT!

$\Rightarrow$ **Empirical evidence** of the use of AT **needed**!

Possible evaluation:

Translation into at least 1 language **before and after AT**

$\Rightarrow$ Compare quality of translations
  (fielded, raters, cognitive)

Translation sciences and practice

- **'Translation-oriented writing' / controlled language**
  $\rightarrow$ Facilitate translation process
    above all technical documentation
    (machines $\leftrightarrow$ humans !)

- **"Translator as proof-reader"** (e.g. in European institutions)

  $\Rightarrow$ **Improve translatability / cross-cultural use of texts**

Implementation:

- First time: ESS Round 5 (2010)

Similar methods used in surveys:

- Surveys with **2 source versions** (e.g. PISA: en-fr)
- **Internal** ex ante translations
  (recommended by cApStAn)
- Translatability Assessment (MAPI Institute)
  $\leftrightarrow$ **no translation!**

Role of ESS Translation Team

- **Analysis** of all comments by ESS Translation Team

- **Forwarding** comments to Questionnaire Design Teams: 1. Comments from AT teams
  2. Comments from ESS Translation Team

⇒ **Decision** if AT comments considered with **Questionnaire Design Teams** (without ESS Translation Team)

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Examples of changes: I. Wording

1. ESS5 Pilot Questionnaire (B40):
And how often would you say that the courts in [country] make decisions that have been influenced by unacceptable *pressure from political parties and politicians?* (RC: never – always)

2. Advance Translation comment:
Does 'unacceptable' mean that some (a certain amount or kind of) pressure is acceptable???

3. ESS5 Final Questionnaire:
Using this card, please say to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about [country] nowadays. (D37): The decisions and actions of the courts are *unduly influenced* by pressure from political parties and politicians.