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SURVEY TRANSLATION AND THE QUESTION OF QUALITY



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Recent progress on survey translation

- Procedures, protocols, tools
- Assessment—its planning, procedures
- Insight into process of production and assessment

Less progress on

- Explication of the goals of survey translation to be realized in and through the translation product
 - Specifications of product required
 - Linking specifications to relevant quality dimensions
 - Relating specifications to components of the improved procedures and protocols
 - Establishing product benchmarks

Topics today

- Target language (TL) versions
- Quality criteria
- Consequences for survey translation

MULTIPLE OPTIONS FOR TARGET LANGUAGE VERSIONS

A four-word sentence of great frequency

Wie geht es Dir?

How goes it to-thee?

Multiple options for target language versions

Wie geht es Dir?

How is it going?

How are things going?

How are things?

How are you?

How are you doing?

How are you feeling?

How are you keeping?

Context determines some options

SALUTATION

(...) Wie geht es Dir?

(...) How are you?

How is it going?

How are things?

How are you feeling?

How are you keeping?

Context determines some options

ENQUIRY- sick friend

Wie geht es Dir?

How are you feeling?

How are you keeping?

How are you doing?

Are you doing OK?

How are things?

How's it going?

(How are you)?

So which version do we choose?

Questions needing answers

- On what basis/bases do we best decide ?
- What are the core criteria for product quality?
- What are the related translation specifications?
- What relevant benchmarks are there, if any?

QUALITY CRITERIA

Survey translation quality criteria

Are there big, obvious issues on the language and translation side ?

Are there big, obvious issues on the survey measurement and error side ?

Language and translation quality criteria ?

Language and translation quality criteria ?

- “Right/wrong” translation choices (e.g. semantics)
- Grammar
- Omissions
- Additions
- Optimal vocabulary, tone, style
- Consistency
- ...

Language and translation quality criteria ?

- Ask the same question
- Right/wrong” translation choices (e.g. semantics)
- Grammar
- Omissions
- Additions
- Optimal vocabulary, tone, style
- Consistency
- ...
- User appropriate
 - Burden, pragmatics, script issues,

Survey measurement and error criteria?

- Comparability of conceptual coverage
- Comparability of measurement properties
- Comparability of stimulus (?)
- Comparability of data

- Target population appropriate
 - Response style, social desirability issues addressed
- ...

Tensions between measurement criteria and translation criteria

- Translation may not realize (be able to realize) intended measurement goals
- Further / other action may be necessary

If we can't have it all, all of the time

- No agree and no no agree
- In the middle

If we can't have it all, all of the time

- Is there a bottom line to guide decisions towards the translation product?
- Are these evidence-based decisions?
- Can we rank priorities?

Bottom line requirements?

- Product meets essential comparative requirements
 - Measurement properties
 - Comparable data
- Viable for users

CONSEQUENCES FOR SURVEY TRANSLATION

In an Ask the Same Question (ASQ) model based on translation

- Design source questionnaire for ASQ
 - question design, harmonization plans, annotations,,
- Anticipate the need to adapt/ modify
 - Adaptation guides and procedures
- Clarify translation requirements (specs, brief)
 - Measurement goals primary
 - Close translation nice but secondary
 - Test and document decisions
- Exploit translation potential
- Learn where to draw the line