Translation Verification in the European Social Survey (ESS)

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8th CSDI Workshop, London
24-26 March 2011
Outline of Presentation

- Summary of ESS translation process
- Summary of verification items and process
- Initial findings
- Reflections
- Next steps
ESS Translation process

- TRAPD procedures used in all five rounds to date
- Translation errors detected previously
- Trial of verification as additional stage in round 5
  - Appointment of cApStAn
  - Verification of 25 items
Verification intervention categories

- OK
- Adaptation
- Mistranslation
- Untranslated text
- Added information
- Missing information
- Consistency
- Register/wording
- Grammar / Syntax
- Layout/Visual issues
- Typo / Punctuation
Verification intervention categories – overview of usage

- Some verifier categories used in all countries
- Number of interventions made varied by country
- Not possible to know which comments / suggestions led to changes being made to translated questionnaires at this stage
Findings - Mistranslation

‘wrong translation, which seriously alters the meaning’

D38 – People have different ideas about the sentences which should be given to offenders. Take for instance the case of a 25 year old man who is found guilty of house burglary for the second time. Which one of the following sentences do you think he should receive?

- Prison sentence
- Suspended prison sentence
- Fine
- Community service
- Any other sentence
Findings – Added information

‘any information given by the target version not given by the source version’

D9 – How dissatisfied or satisfied are you with the way the police treated you the last time this happened?

1. Very dissatisfied
2. Dissatisfied
3. Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied
4. Satisfied
5. Very satisfied
Findings – Missing information

‘any information which is given by the source version, which is not given by the target version’

F6: You just told me that you live with your husband/wife/partner. Which one of the descriptions on this card describes your relationship to them?
Reflections...

- Initial assessment of the contribution of verification

- Improvements to the verifier intervention categories
  - fewer categories? priority intervention categories?

- Improvements to the TVFF
  - restructure the excel file? Use excel at all in future?

- Improve verifier training?
  - enhance consistency in application of categories both within and between countries
  - Provide background information on specific items?

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Next steps...

- Numerical evaluation of the range of interventions
- Assess the range of interventions across countries
- Establish which categories the NCs and translation experts feel are most important
- Any lessons learned from the type of questions selected for verification?

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