Translatability Assessment of (draft) Questionnaire Items in 3MC
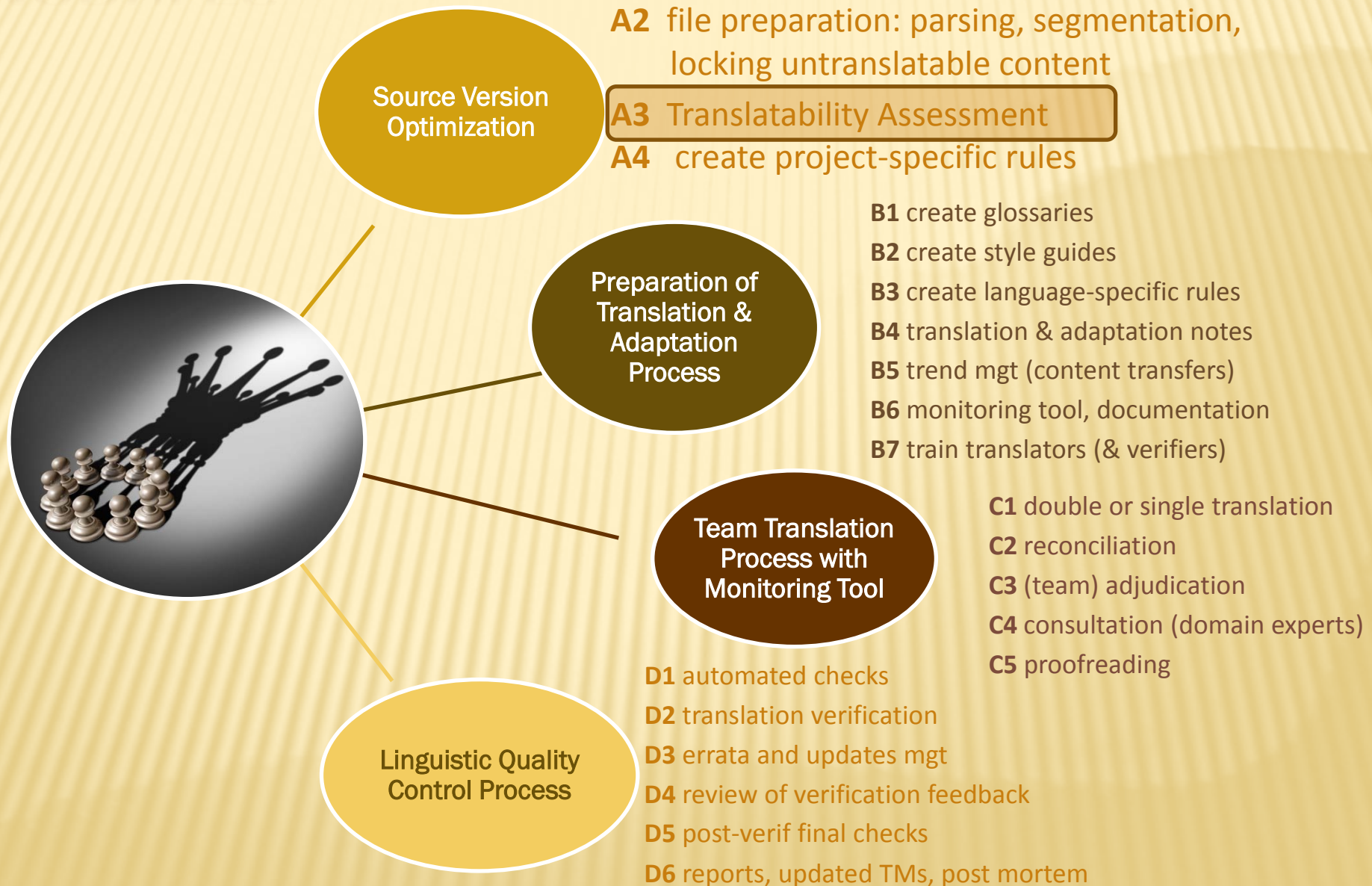
CSDI 2015 Workshop
City University, London
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MODULES

A1 controlled writing

A2 file preparation: parsing, segmentation, locking untranslatable content

A3 Translatability Assessment

A4 create project-specific rules

Source Version Optimization

B1 create glossaries

B2 create style guides

B3 create language-specific rules

B4 translation & adaptation notes

B5 trend mgt (content transfers)

B6 monitoring tool, documentation

B7 train translators (& verifiers)

Preparation of Translation & Adaptation Process

C1 double or single translation

C2 reconciliation

C3 (team) adjudication

C4 consultation (domain experts)

C5 proofreading

Team Translation Process with Monitoring Tool

D1 automated checks

D2 translation verification

D3 errata and updates mgt

D4 review of verification feedback

D5 post-verif final checks

D6 reports, updated TMs, post mortem

Linguistic Quality Control Process

PROJECT CYCLE

WASHINGTON POST, SEPT. 2, 2014

2001: 99% of Vietnamese respondents said they favored military rule

2006: only one third of the respondents said they favored military rule

Source: article by Prof. Charles Kurzman

TRANSLATION OF "MILITARY RULE"

* Some scholars looked for causal explanations rooted in economic, social or political change

* ENG "Having the military rule" translated as "the role of the military"

* In ALB (2001) "Having the military rule" translated as "Having military rules"

* (83% of the ALB sample in 2001 dropped to 12.5% of the sample in 2006)

TRANSLATABILITY ASSESSMENT

English draft source	Translatability Evaluation	LINGUIST'S COMMENT	SUGGESTIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE WORDING	SUGGESTIONS FOR TRANSLATION/ADAPTATION NOTES
I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country.				
For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country?	KNOWN DIFFICULTY, KNOWN WORKAROUNDS	1. the referent of the pronoun "it" is "one", which in turn refers to a type of political system. In a number of languages, repetition is desirable to achieve clarity. 2. "fairly" poses a problem to less experienced translators.		It is acceptable to render "For each one" as "for each type of political system" "fairly good" and "fairly bad" mean "rather good, relatively good" and "rather bad, relatively bad"
(Read out and code one answer for each):				
Having the army rule	POTENTIALLY AMBIGUOUS	The "army rule" can be misunderstood as the "army regulations". It is known that "rule" is a difficult word to translate.	The army governs the country or A military government	

STRAIGHTFORWARD	No potential translation or adaptation problems identified during the advance translation of this segment into languages from at least two language groups.
KNOWN DIFFICULTY, KNOWN WORKAROUNDS	A translation/adaptation difficulty has been recognised in this segment and has been encountered in the past. Satisfactory solutions to this issue have been successfully implemented.
POTENTIAL ISSUES	The current wording or content of this segment is likely to give rise to translation or adaptation problems in some languages, to the extent that functional equivalence may be difficult to achieve.
POTENTIALLY AMBIGUOUS	The current wording or content of this segment could be interpreted in more than one way and it is desirable to disambiguate the source version of this segment before submitting it for translation/adaptation.
UNNECESSARILY COMPLEX	The current wording or syntax of this segment is somewhat contorted, for example due to use of several clauses, questions embedded in questions or unnecessary use of passive voice. The source version can be simplified without loss of meaning.
REQUIRES REVIEW	The current source version of this segment is not suitable for translation/adaptation and needs to be edited before submitting for translation/adaptation.
POTENTIAL CULTURAL ISSUE	The semantic content of this segment may be difficult to adapt in a particular cultural or language group.
DOUBLE-BARRELLED	A question touches upon more than one issue, yet allows only for one answer. Many double-barrelled questions can be detected by the existence of the grammatical conjunction "and" in them.
AGREEMENT ISSUE	There is either an agreement issue within the segment (e.g. subject-verb agreement, or sequence of tenses, or a pronoun-antecedent agreement) or an agreement issue between two segments (e.g. no grammatical match between a question and response options).
CONSISTENCY	In this segment, a different term, expression or form of address has been used versus other occurrences of similar content; and this inconsistency seems to be unintentional.
REDUNDANCY	This segment contains a tautology or unnecessary repetition. Removing it would not alter the meaning of the segment.
POSSIBLE ADDITION	The current wording or syntax of this segment is elliptic or unclear, and its implicit meaning is likely to get lost in translation. This could be solved by adding a word or a piece of information.
LOGICAL PROBLEM	This segment contains a logical problem or there is a logical problem between this segment and another segment, and this issue seems to be unintentional.

ENGLISH VERSION >< SOURCE VERSION

* Anglo-Saxon predominance in item writing
* Item writing practices initiated in/for English (and for English speakers) 30-40 years ago prevail
* enduring adaptation difficulties
* Items written in good English (and that work well in a cog lab) => often need to be tweaked
* A good **source** version may be a bit bland in English
* When desirable: it can be adapted for use in English-speaking countries

CONTROLLED WRITING

- ✖ Tip: refer to tutorials for technical communication in English by and for non-native English speakers

tekom (2014), Guideline: Rule-based writing — English for Non-Native Writers, Stuttgart, 2014

- ✖ For example, ENG with words in –ing
  can be interpreted as gerund, adjective or noun

- ✖ ~~Flying planes can be dangerous~~

- ✖ It can be dangerous to fly planes

AIM OF TRANSLATABILITY ASSESSMENT

❑ to combine linguists' expertise with that of item developers

❑ in a collaborative effort to bridge the gap between

  o a draft item written in the source language; and

  o an actual source version of that item, suitable for translation/adaptation.

❑ Relatively low cost – comprehensive documentation

❑ Extends to potential cultural issues or logical problems

POTENTIAL CULTURAL ISSUES

English draft source	Translatability Evaluation	LINGUIST'S COMMENT	SUGGESTIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE WORDING	SUGGESTIONS FOR TRANSLATION/ADAPTATION NOTES
Have you ever been anointed with the holy oil?	POTENTIAL CULTURAL ISSUE	An interviewer note may be needed here. In orthodoxy, the two anointments are given during the baptizing. Many people (even if they are believers and consider themselves as religious) may not know this, since they were baptized immediately after birth. If an orthodox person is baptized, s/he is anointed, too.		Suggestion for interviewer note: if the respondent is of orthodox confession and s/he doesn't know the answer to this question, ask her/him if s/he is baptized OR state that "the anointment with the holy oil in the orthodoxy is performed during the baptism"
If (SURVEY COUNTRY) and Russia got into a serious military conflict, do you think the U.S. would or would not use military force to defend our country?	POTENTIAL CULTURAL ISSUE	May not be appropriate to ask this one in Serbia. Remember NATO bombing Serbia? Serbs do.		

REPORTING A TRANSLATABILITY ISSUE

English	Translatability Evaluation	LINGUIST'S COMMENT	SUGGESTIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE WORDING
I prefer eating light or fat-free foods and drinks.	LOGICAL PROBLEM	Only the verb "eating" was used in this sentence although there were also drinks mentioned. In ESP this would not sound right. Additionally, "fat-free" should be linked with foods, and "light" with drinks.	I prefer fat-free foods and light drinks.
	REDUNDANCY	food is always the object of eating. "Eating foods" would be redundant in Indonesian: it would translate in repeated identical words.	

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LINGUISTIC QUALITY CONTROL

COLLECTIVE OWNERSHIP

- Linguist may propose alternative wording
  => does not always "improve" the item but proposes a way to avoid a translation or adaptation issue

- Item writers' responsibility:
  + consider the proposed wording
  + adopt or edit it
  + perhaps reject it and come up with a new solution
  + draft a new adaptation note
  + (or drop the item) ...

Questions?

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THANK YOU