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Introduction



Translation is an ancient profession that to date remains in great demand. As a translator, you are responsible not only for transferring information from one language to another, but also for conveying the meaning of the text among different cultures, contexts, and media.

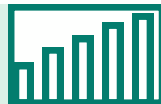
As a part of this complex process, there is always balance between **faithfulness** and **creativity**.

A faithful translation is one that stays true to the source text and ensures no meaning is lost. The difficulty with this is also ensuring that your translation is not too literal and rigid.

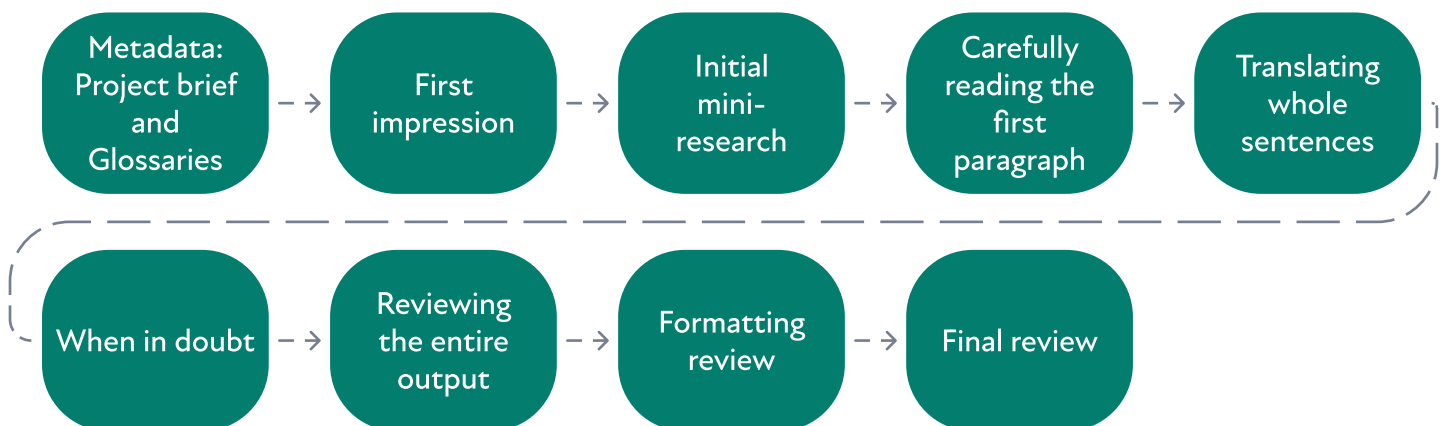
A creative translation, on the other hand, is one that keeps the essence of the author's original text but uses creativity and innovative phrasing to adapt it appropriately to the target language. This type of translation is needed when there is no precise way of using the same words in the two languages, due to idiomatic, cultural, and contextual reasons, among others.

Here at BLEND, we ask you to keep in mind this balance - make the translation as faithful as possible, while using creativity when needed.

Step-by-Step Guide



When working according to the following step-by-step translation guidelines, you ensure you've taken the steps towards producing a high-quality and accurate translation. Every step includes instructions and an explanation of the intended goal so as to provide a deeper understanding of the main objective of your work.



Step 1: Metadata: Project brief and Glossaries

Before you begin translating, look for resources you may have been provided with by BLEND or the Client. Read the project brief thoroughly to get a summary of what the client is looking for and ensure you are acquainted with the glossary and any other reference documents or links. If any of these resources or instructions remain unclear, it is important to contact BLEND for further explanation.

Goal: Ensure you understand the client's request, and you are prepared to start working accordingly. This understanding is the first step to ensuring our client is satisfied with the final output.

Step 2: First Impression

Open the source document. Read the title carefully and briefly review the source text to get a general understanding of the document you are about to translate. Focus on the following parameters:

The general topic.

- The subject matter
- Level of proficiency and terminology– is the text filled with technical terms?
- What is the text's register and writing style – is it formal text or casual?
- What is the structure of the text?
- What sections of the text may be more challenging for you? Which sections may require more research and thought?

This step should be implemented for every file format: Word, PDF, Excel, and even translations done on a CAT Tool. This is especially important for work from within a CAT tool as it often segments the text, making it harder to get a sense of the bigger picture. Preview the original document with its original layout at this stage, to ensure you understand the overall context.

Goal: To get a broad overview of the nature of the text and what you could expect to see in the final translation. This will help you understand the general context of the text and enable you to fine-tune the translation accordingly.



Step 3: Initial Mini Research

Before reading the translation, research the document's subject matter. For example: Look for the company's website/ relevant Wikipedia page/ article from a [Reliable Source](#). It is best to read about the subject matter in the target language, in order to become familiar with the relevant semantic field.

If the client supplied any additional information, it is imperative you read through it carefully and thoroughly. This information will serve as a valuable resource for the target text.

Goal: To deepen your understanding of the text and its semantic field, so you become familiar with the relevant terminology and approach the text with the proper context.

Step 4: Carefully reading the first paragraph

Reviewing the first paragraph will require you to understand the structure of the text and where that "first paragraph" lies. This may not always be obvious. If the text is an Excel chart, for example, the first paragraph will be the first cell. Review and segment the text in a way that stays true to the text structure and is short enough for you to remain focused.

Once identified, read the first paragraph carefully. If you encounter any unknown terms/ words, look it up before writing any translation. Make sure you understand the grammar, meaning, and context of the text.

Goal: To understand the general context of the paragraph so that your translation will be accurate.

Step 5: Translating whole sentences

Now that you have a good understanding of the terminology and subject matter of the text, and a preview of the first paragraph, you should start translating the text sentence by sentence.

Some important points to remember:

- Always compare complete sentences and never go word-by-word.
- Never forget the larger context of the text; read each sentence within the context of the preceding sentence and the text as a whole.
- Do not hesitate to go back and modify the previous sentences based on your new understanding.
- Goal: Identify all errors in the text; focus on accuracy and make sure the text flows "naturally".

Goal: Identify any and all errors in the text.

Step 6: When in doubt

The process of providing an accurate and trustworthy translation usually requires using external resources. When in doubt, you are more than encouraged to make use of [reliable sources](#), such as certain dictionaries, websites, and newspapers, to determine the best possible word choice. It's important to remember that not every resource online can be trusted, so refer to our [guide on how to identify a reliable resource](#) before you begin searching online.

If you are unable to find an answer in a reliable source, you are expected to consult with an expert, a peer, or a trusted native speaker. You will still need to find some sort of proof to validate their suggestion.

It's important to remember that you should not feel awkward about double-checking yourself. You may find unexpected suggestions you never thought about by doing a simple online search.

Goal: To provide the most accurate translation by allowing yourself to use reliable sources to verify your decision.

Step 7: Reviewing the entire output

After you finish translating the file, read it again, this time considering the entire text and making sure you still stand by your translation choices. It is reasonable to make changes to the translation even at this point.

It's important to review the text for word consistency throughout, for this is an important factor in creating a smooth and readable text. However, sometimes the same source word will require alternate translation choices depending on the context and to avoid repetition. Use your discretion here, but ensure you have good reason for breaking the consistency.

Goal: To ensure the translation is as accurate as possible, consistent, and coherent throughout the entire text.





Step 8: Formatting review

Review the formatting of the entire file. Does it match BLEND Formatting Guidelines? Was the formatting of the original text preserved?

Goal: The appearance is the first thing that catches the client's eye, therefore it's important to ensure the final copy is not just accurate, but that it also looks clean and professional.

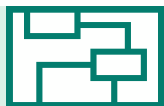
Step 9: Final review

We strongly recommend that you take a break before this final stage. You can water your plants/ walk your dog/ do the dishes. Then close the source text and read **ONLY** your translation. Make sure that:

- The text sounds fluent and natural.
- All the messages that ought to be conveyed are indeed conveyed.
- Everything is coherent and makes sense.

Don't hesitate to change and adjust the translation to gain a more natural-sounding fluency. If possible, ask another native speaker of the target language to read it through and ask them whether the text sounds natural or if it is obvious that the document was translated from another language.

Goal: To make sure the translation sounds fluent and natural, and that you are pleased with the final result.



Not all sources are equally useful. Some expose you to data-based academic information, and some are not based on anything but the writer's intuition. In this age of big data, search engines and free accesses, the amount of information available at our finger-tips can be overwhelming, and the reliability may be ambiguous. This quick guide will outline which sources BLEND considers more reliable than others.

Language and Grammar

English-Target

It is extremely important and highly encouraged to look up translation suggestions, to see how other people translated the word you are currently debating. In this case, there is no "high authority" and no absolute truth – any suggestion can be appropriate depending on context. It is your job to find the most accurate translation. However, some sources may provide suggestions that are more established than others.

There are four types of sources:

- **English-Target dictionaries:** Make sure the site is regularly updated when using these types of dictionaries. The best dictionaries usually belong to well-established publishers such as Collins and Oxford University Press.
- **Machine translations:** the most common machine translation services are provided by [Google Translate](#). Try to input as much context as possible to ensure the most accurate translation. In addition, try translating both ways – translate from English to Target, next take the Target and translate it back to English, and then compare results. It goes without saying that ***machine translations should be treated with great caution and should be cross-checked with other sources.***
- **Statistical suggestions:** Some websites, such as the well-known site Reverso, provide translation suggestions based on statistics their algorithm gathered across the web. This is a good way to get a general idea of the term's usage, but the suggestions must be cross-checked with other sources.
- **Indirect sources:** Some other sources provide translation suggestions indirectly. For example, changing the language of a [Wikipedia](#) page can provide a clue as to how the term could be translated. You can also use the company's websites by changing the language and analyzing the translation. Again, treat this as only a suggestion and cross-check it with other sources

English - English

There are many free and reliable English-English online dictionaries and databases which can be divided into three categories:

- **Traditional dictionaries:** Many well-established, traditional dictionaries have been uploaded to the web and are updated regularly. Some of them are free, such as [Collins](#), [Cambridge](#), and [Mariam-Webster](#), and some of them require a subscription such as [Oxford](#). These are all highest authority sources.
- **Web dictionaries:** There are dozens of English-English dictionaries that are not associated with any traditional dictionaries. The most reliable two are [Wiktionary](#) and [The Free Dictionary](#). Although they are relatively reliable, you should cross-check their suggestions with at least one more source.
- **Slang dictionaries:** When encountering slang words, a traditional dictionary does not always have the answer. Luckily, there are a lot of English slang dictionaries. [Urban Dictionary](#) is a great source for getting a hint about the meaning of the word - but always treat it with a grain of salt! Dictionaries of the sort are full of nonsense and spam. Read carefully and find several examples of the same definition. After finding a definition you think is optional, google your word and try to see how it is used in a sentence. Take everything as a suggestion and cross-check with other sources – slang words can often be offensive or inappropriate, so try and have a very good understanding of the word before choosing the translation.

Research and Information

When translating or editing, there is often a need to seek further information regarding the subject matter, as described in BLEND's [Step-by-Step Review Guide](#). When conducting web research, always check for the reliability of your source. Always make sure you know who the authors are and be certain they are a credible source on the subject matter. Today, many sites seem to provide professional content, but actually hire content writers to write articles for the purpose of ad exposure.

Following is a list of reliable internet sources from the most reliable to the least:

1. **Academic journals:** This is the highest authority source. Academic papers go through a very rigid peer review process, and since they are written by experts in the field, they are extremely reliable. Most academic papers can be found for free on [Google Scholar](#) and [Research Gate](#). Some papers are extremely long, so start by reading the Abstract or the Conclusion. This is often sufficient for a general understanding of the subject matter.
2. **Sites of official relevant sources:** When looking for a broad understanding of terminology, sites related to official governmental municipal departments or relevant institutions are considered highly reliable. For example, when looking for health related terms, the Ministry of Health and a hospital's website are reliable sources.
3. **High-ranked newspapers:** In the age of fake news, it is extremely important to check the reliability of a news outlet before using it as a source. A comprehensive list of reliable news outlets would be impossible to put together, so just be aware of the reputation of the news outlet for thorough and unbiased reporting. Some news outlets may write for publicity and their reports are not verified by real research.
4. **Wikipedia:** Wikipedia is the number one source for quick and in-depth information on almost every subject, but it is not always up-to-date and carefully edited. Always check the footnotes on Wikipedia – does the statement on which you are relying have any reference attached to it? Is this reference an academic article or a link to an obscure website? Can this information be found anywhere else online? It is highly recommended that you enter the original sources and read directly from them instead of just from the Wikipedia page.
5. **Other sources:** Other sources should be approached with skepticism. Always cross-check your findings, and make sure you know what the source of the information is and their relation to it.

Cross-checking the Source

Based on the above scale of reliability, use the following guide for cross-checking your sources

1. If your source is a “highest authority” source, there is no need to cross-check it with other sources.
2. If one of your sources appears in the second/third place in terms of reliability on the above list, you should cross-check it with one more source.
3. For all other sources of varying reliability, find at least three independent sources to corroborate. This is a worst-case scenario rule, which comes in handy when you are unsure of the reliability of your sources.

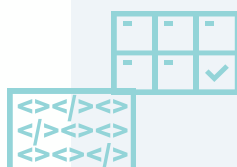
Using Machine translation – is that an option?

It would be naïve of us to ignore the gigantic NLP-generated elephant in the room – Google Translate. A great tool, for sure, but we all know that it is far from perfect.

First and foremost, we would like to stress: Using a machine translation of any sort, e.g., you put your text in GT and send us the output without going through it, is considered a severe violation of BLEND’s trust and expectations, and will have consequences. Every translator knows that such an action shows disrespect to both BLEND and the client.

However, translation machines can be used to get an initial understanding of the general idea of the text. This is not recommended, but if you do choose to be assisted by machine translation, follow these MT tips:

- Try to provide the machine with as much context as possible. Because it is statistics based, if you give it a single word, it will give you the most common translation. The more context you add, the more accurate and specific the translation.
- Most MTs are English based, and therefore are recommended to use with translating into and from English. When you translate from and to languages that are not English, try to go through English first (e.g: if you translate from Chinese to Korean, translate the Chinese word into English, and make sure this translation is accurate and appropriate. Only then, translate the English word into Korean).
- Pay extra attention to grammar –machine translation often relies on English grammar, resulting in Spanish translations that are English sounding.
- Machine translation is not a reliable source and is even less reliable when it comes to terminology and localization (Even if they have that tiny shield or any sort of “verification” next to the translation!). Always back your choices with a [reliable source](#).



Review



Some of your work will be randomly sampled for quality by BLEND’s Language Leaders. Every translation reviewed will receive a score, ranging between 1 and 6. This score is then calculated into your overall score, and affects your badge on the BLEND platform.

Scale	Score	Significance
6	Excellent	Perfect translation!
5	Very Good	Very good job with few or very minor errors.
4	Good/Fair	Overall it was a good translation, but some aspects need improvement. Read the corrections thoroughly.
3	Low quality	The translation included several mistakes and did not meet BLEND’s quality standards.
2-1	Unacceptable	Many issues were found in your translation indicating very sloppy work.

The score will be determined by the amount, **type** and **severity** of the inaccuracies found in the translation.

It’s important to note that the quality measure will affect your badge in the BLEND platform, and the volume and speed at which you are offered future projects. You can monitor your badge and review which projects affected your badge from within your profile.

- 6 – You will be able to progress in our badging system in every future cycle as long as your volume of projects remains at the required level.
- 4-5- This will affect your rating. If your average score is below 5.7, you will be unable to move up a badge.
- 3- Four projects with this score within one year will place you on probation and may result in your removal from the platform.
- 1-2 – You will immediately be placed on probation and your next low score will result in your removal from our platform.

Probation

As mentioned above, when there are quality issues detected in your work, you will be placed on probation. The Operations Manager who manages the language pair you work in will reach out to advise you and provide you with the reason. You will always be made aware of your status and it will be your responsibility to improve the quality of your work moving forward to prevent further action. Once you are on probation, your projects will be sampled more frequently.

Error Types



As mentioned above, inaccuracies will be classified into 10 types. The purpose of this classification is to reflect your weaknesses, so you know where to pay extra attention to improve.

	Error Type	Description	Example	Example explanation
Source Language	Source Grammar	Incorrect understanding of syntax, morphology, and verb system of the source language	<p>English: The strength of ClearGuard HD's clinical evidence, which included six studies, and the cost modeling evidence, which covered one year [...]</p> <p>Spanish: La solidez de las pruebas clínicas de ClearGuard HD, que incluían seis estudios, y las pruebas de modelos de costes, que cubrieron un año [...]</p>	In English, the verb included is in perfect aspect. The perfect aspect in Spanish should be translated as-Pretérito Indefinido. And therefore the correct translation would be incluyeron .
	Comprehension	Incorrect understanding of the author's intention, in context.		

Error Type	Description	Example	Example explanation
Target Grammar	Incorrect usage of target language grammar: syntax, morphology, verb system and punctuation.	<p>English: "its education system"</p> <p>Spanish: "su sistema educativa"</p>	In Spanish, the grammatical gender of system is masculine, and therefore the translation should be "sistema educativo".
Word choice	It seems that the translator understood the source language, however the words they chose to use in the target language do not convey the exact same message, or do not have a natural and fluent sound.	<p>English: My life is actually pretty stress-free.</p> <p>Spanish: Actualmente mi vida está casi libre de todo stress.</p>	Actually is a "false friend". In Spanish it means "en realidad, realmente, de hecho", while the Spanish word "actualmente" means "currently, at present, now".
Terminology	Insufficient and unexhaustive utilization of resources – not choosing the most accurate term based on validated data and comprehensive research. This section also includes term consistency – using the same terminology for the same terms along the entire text.	<p>English: Heat Pen Set</p> <p>Translations: Conjunto de plumas térmicas</p>	Heat pen was translated too literally: Pen = pluma in certain Spanish dialects and Heat = térmico. This is not the term commonly used for a heat pen.

Error Type	Description	Example	Example explanation	
Target language	Localization and Idioms	Translation that is not culturally accurate.	<p>English: Here he is, speak of the devil.</p> <p>Spanish: Aquí está, hablando del diablo.</p>	<p>The idiom “speak of the devil” is understandable and natural sounding in English.</p> <p>In Spanish, on the other hand, the idiom “hablando del diablo” rings no bell. The Spanish equivalent should be “hablando del rey de Roma” or “hablando del Papa de Roma”.</p>
	Word Omission/ Addition	Failure to include all information provided in the source language or inserting additional information that does not appear in the source language.	<p>English: Best-in-class processing power and image resolutic made LG UltraGear a household name.</p> <p>Spanish: Potencia de procesamient y resolución de imagen, claves en el éxito de LG UltraGear.</p>	<p>The translator omitted “Best-in-class” (mejor de su clase) and the verb “made”.</p>
	Formatting Guidelines and Customer Instructions	Failure to follow the company’s formatting and layout guidelines, while adhering to the glossaries and special instructions provided by clients.		<p>If there is a contradiction between Client guidelines and BLEND guidelines, the Client guidelines are to be used.</p>
	Typos and Misspellings	Incorrect spelling of words.	<p>English: He met him in Paris.</p> <p>Spanish: Lo conocio en Paris.</p>	<p>The translator didn’t use the Spanish diacritic accents. The correct form should be “conoció” and París.</p>
	Suggestion	A general note that is not calculated into the overall score.		

Severity

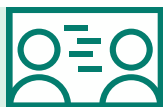


Every inaccuracy will be assigned one of three severity levels:

Severity level	Explanation
Minor	The original meaning is conveyed but not in the best manner.
Major	The original meaning is not conveyed but can still be vaguely understood.
Critical	The original meaning is completely altered.

The greater the severity level of the inaccuracy, the lower the score the translation will receive.

Code of Conduct



Here at BLEND, our mission is to empower localization professionals to thrive and grow in a positive and open-minded forum that welcomes feedback and shared experiences from our community members.

The goal of our community guidelines is to set our expectations for behavior and conduct among our community members, clients, and employees.

Adopting and enforcing our code of conduct will help us all to create a positive social atmosphere and help with the healthy growth of our community.

As a translator working with BLEND, you may sometimes communicate with clients directly and you'll need to always remember in those interactions that you are representing BLEND. You are expected to communicate with [clients](#), with [BLEND](#) and with [other translators](#) in a professional and respectful manner.

General tone and manner

We expect BLENDers to behave at all times in accordance with the code of conduct listed below. There is one vital rule that applies for any kind of communication: **Use respectful language**. Do not curse or use inappropriate or offensive language. We know that translating is challenging, and that criticism is difficult to receive. You are always welcome to share your feedback and to disagree, but this should be done professionally and politely.

Usage of aggressive and offensive language is considered a severe violation of BLEND's code of conduct and will have serious consequences.

Communication with Client

On every project page, there are two discussion boxes:

1. Translators-BLEND Talk
2. Client Discussion

We encourage you to approach the client for professional related questions regarding the project. When you have these questions, discussing it directly with the client is an important part of the translation process when striving for perfection. However, you are expected to approach the client only on linguistic-related subjects, such as:

- ✓ A double meaning or vagueness in the original text that you wish to resolve.
- ✓ A question about the glossary provided by the client.
- ✓ A question regarding the field of expertise that you were unable to resolve using the sources recommended in this document.

When approaching the client, always use appropriate and respectful language as stated [here](#).

If you encounter a concern regarding a non-linguistic related topic, contact BLEND Support in the Support Chat Box on the project page.

Some topics are off limits and approaching the client is prohibited:

- ✗ Anything business related - payment, pricing, marketing etc.
- ✗ Sending the client your personal details and offering your services outside of BLEND.

Those discussion boxes are monitored by the company and violation of those guidelines will have serious consequences.



Reporting to BLEND

As a BLEND translator, you are not only our representative but also our eyes and ears in the field. If you encounter anything that seems a bit out of place or unusual, you are expected to report it back to us so we can correct it. Here are some examples:

- An Excel sheet that includes the same sentence many times
- Double payment for the same project
- Glossaries that do not match the project, etc.

We try our best to avoid such mistakes but also trust our translators to be honest enough to report them.

We are determined to treat you in a respectful and professional manner and expect you to do the same. If we discover situations where technical mistakes such as the ones mentioned above were overlooked by the translator, this will be considered a severe violation of the BLEND Code of Conduct and will have serious consequences.

Communicating with Other Translators

BLEND's community of translators includes certified and talented translators, just like yourself. Although BLEND's translators are scattered all over the globe, we are all one community and should share our knowledge and thoughts with one another. Our translator forum exists for this exact purpose. In the forum, you are encouraged to communicate with other translators, exchange thoughts, ask questions and consult with each other. You will also have the opportunity to engage with Live Q&A and learn about BLEND webinars. BLEND's community team is also there on a regular basis, to answer questions addressed to BLEND.

The forum is a safe space for you to communicate with other community members. To keep it that way, the only language acceptable is a respectful and professional one. This is relevant when talking to other translators as well as when talking to the BLEND community team.

For safety reasons, you are not allowed to exchange personal details with other translators or to contact them outside of the forum without the permission of a BLEND member.