Spanish Department

Revision Manual
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I FOREWORD

The translation work carried out by the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Translation must meet certain watertight quality criteria, not only because most of it is the vehicle for the official policies which are the Commission’s raison d’être, but also because any public service is inextricably accountable to the citizens who pay for it.

Since translation is by its very nature susceptible of subjective improvement, institutional translation must be subject to a quality-control process based on objective and unequivocal criteria, which in turn are fulfilled by means of revision and evaluation. Although good quality should be an inherent part of the translation process itself, all translated texts must undergo some sort of revision. Revision guarantees final quality via a series of actions which, endorsing or improving the text, result in the best possible rendering.

Institutional translation is collective and anonymous. No matter who the translator of a given text is, DGT translators do not work in isolation. They do not choose one term over another out of personal preference, nor can they disregard the plentiful treasure trove of work done by their many colleagues. They feed on a wealth of knowledge and experience, and this is ultimately reflected in the quality of their translations. Revision is a part of this shared endeavour and is therefore a necessary action.

All translators are also revisers, either of their own translations or of those done by others, and are well aware of the principles governing good translation and accurate revision. These principles, distilled over the many years of common experience of the Commission’s Spanish translators, have never been committed to paper. The Spanish Department has decided to consolidate this knowledge and experience in a document listing the principles and procedures to be followed when revising. The purpose is not merely to lay down revision methodology, but also to serve as a guide and food for thought for future translators.

This document, of which this is just the first draft (it will no doubt be improved upon over time), is the result of a series of working sessions carried out during 2010 by an ad hoc working group made up of several members of each of the three units of the Spanish Department and its Coordination Team¹.

¹ Unit 1: Laura Campmany, Pedro Delgado, María Luisa Feliu, Gonzalo Solano; Unit 2: José Bouzas, María Jesús Iribarren, Victoria Pagadigorría, Carlos Plaza, Teresa Renales; Unit 3: Victoria Carande, Myriam García de Leániz, Miquel Vidal; Web Unit: María José Otero; Coordination Team: Pollux Hernúñez, Alberto Rivas.

EN translation by Pollux Hernúñez, revised by Charles Gittins.
II REVISION

Given the complexity of the revision task and the vagueness of the concept itself it is necessary, before going into practical aspects in any depth, to set out in theoretical terms the nature and function of revision, and to determine the type of texts to be revised and the various possible forms of revision.

1 Definition

Comparison of a translation with its original in order to point out and/or correct possible shortcomings, both in terms of content and formal presentation.

2 Aims

In the context of DGT, the aims of revision are threefold:

- To improve translation quality.
- To serve as an instrument for quality control.
- To provide professional training for translators and revisers alike.

3 Types of revision

1 Thorough revision
The reviser reads the translation and the original sentence by sentence and inserts his/her corrections and remarks. This corresponds to the REI (or REX) code in the official classification. In principle, the whole text must be revised in this way, but in certain circumstances (e.g. if the translator is an expert in the subject, or if the text is a subsequent version of a previous translation) partial revision may do.

2 Cross-reading
The reviser reads the translation and, if something strikes him/her as odd, checks against the original to make sure that they match and inserts his/her corrections and remarks. This corresponds to the LEI (or LEX) code in the official classification.
Revision is not:

- *A mere reading-through*
  Reading a translated text with no reference to the original.

- *Spot-checking*
  Partial or selective check of a translated text just to gauge its quality.

4 Quality-control levels

When doing their work revisers shall bear in mind the two levels of quality control established by DGT (Note KJL/MBR D(2007)24311 of 17.12.2007):

- Level 1 corresponds to a high level of quality control to be performed by somebody other than the translator (revision or cross-reading). See Appendix 2A.
- Level 2 corresponds to a less exacting quality control requirement to be performed preferably by somebody other than the translator. See Appendix 2B.
III PRINCIPLES OF REVISION

In order to perform their task in the most effective way possible, revisers shall observe the following theoretical principles:

1. Assume from the outset that the translation to be revised is of good quality.
2. Revision effort should be in proportion to the importance of the text.
3. Clearly inadequate translation should be given straight back to the translator.
4. Do not rewrite a translation.
5. Do not present your personal preferences as gospel.
6. Make changes whenever you can understand the translation only by reading the original.
7. The fewer changes, the better.
8. Back up any changes that are not self-explanatory with references to concrete documentary sources.
9. Make sure that the changes you make are relevant.
10. Point out borderline cases.
11. Dialogue with the translator is of capital importance.
12. Always see revision as a training opportunity for revisers and translators alike.
13. Responsibility for all translation lies with the Department as a whole. Authorship of a given translation is the translator’s, the reviser’s task being complementary.
IV REVISION PROCEDURE

In order to describe the revision process in a practical manner, the different steps involved in an ideal revision task are listed below in chronological order. Those steps which are the translator’s responsibility are also included, since he/she is a part of the act of revision. These descriptions are equally valid for revision done on paper or on screen.

1 Text preparation and delivery
   The translator shall hand in a finished translation (i.e. after self-revision, spell-checking, etc.) indicating any checks, doubts, solutions, and relevant reference documents. The translation must be delivered with enough time to spare so that it can be revised in the best possible conditions.

2 Receipt
   Upon receiving the translation, the reviser shall check the data on the worksheet for any particular instructions and consult the TraDesk note.

3 Reading and comparing
   The reviser shall read a segment of the translated text and compare it with its equivalent in the original.

4 Changes
   The reviser shall clearly indicate, by underlining or any other conventional sign, all errors, omissions, additions, inaccuracies, inconsistencies or spelling mistakes, so that they can readily be corrected in the translation. Suggestions should be indicated in a distinctive way.

5 Context consistency
   When a change is made, the reviser shall modify the context accordingly, whenever necessary.

6 Overall consistency
   The reviser must always keep in mind that making a change in one part of the text may entail changes in another part.

7 Summing up
   The reviser shall go through all the changes made to make sure that they are necessary and to prepare the dialogue.
8 **Dialogue**  
If needed, the reviser shall talk to the translator about the main points of what he/she has changed.

9 **Arbitration**  
Where translator and reviser disagree, they may by mutual agreement apply to a third party in order to reach the best solution. If the disagreement persists, the Head of Unit has the final say.

10 **Closing formalities**  
The translator shall put the changes indicated by the reviser into the document. The translator must accept any changes relating to errors, omissions, additions, inaccuracies, inconsistencies, spelling mistakes, incorrect or incomplete quotations from official documents, or a breach of the guidelines of the inter-institutional *Style Guide* or the *Department’s Guide*, or of consolidated or coined terminology on any given topic. They may, however, choose to ignore mere suggestions.
V APPENDIX
1 Revision samples

These samples come from texts actually translated in the Spanish Department and revised by the Quality Working Group in 2008 and 2009.

A On the screen

Original

(8) Commercial whaling was suspended in 1986 as a result of a moratorium agreed by the majority of countries represented in the IWC. Uncertainties in the scientific analyses concerning the status of various whale stocks were the main reasons for this pause in commercial whaling. Ever since, the main issue regularly discussed at IWC meetings is whether whale stocks have recovered enough to lift the ban on commercial whaling in a controlled fashion.

(9) The dual mandate of the IWC of both managing whaling and conserving whales has led to extremely polarised positions over the years between leading ‘pro-whaling’ States and ‘anti-whaling’ ones. Leading pro-whaling States (e.g. Japan, Iceland and Norway) have consistently contested the moratorium and still carry out whaling for what they call scientific purposes or other exceptions.

(10) The general ban on commercial whaling decided within the IWC is in line with EC policies, as defined by the above-mentioned legislation. It is important that the IWC ensures the continuation of the moratorium on the basis of the currently available scientific information. However, in virtually all IWC meetings since the entry into force of the ban, Japan has proposed amendments to the 'Schedule' to the Convention to authorise whaling under certain conditions and de facto lift the ban for certain stocks. Therefore, the 20 EU Member States that are IWC members have to express at each IWC meeting their position on such proposals which fall within Community competence. It is anticipated that this will happen again at the 2008 IWC Annual meeting in Santiago (Chile) and subsequent meetings.

2 Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, UK.
(8) La caza comercial de ballenas se suspendió en 1986, como resultado de una moratoria acordada por la mayoría de los países representados en la CBI. La razón principal de esa pausa en la caza comercial fue la existencia de incertidumbres en los estudios científicos respecto a la situación de varias poblaciones de ballenas. Desde entonces, el tema más debatido en las reuniones de la CBI es el de determinar si las poblaciones de ballenas se han recuperado lo suficiente como para levantar de forma controlada la prohibición de la caza comercial.

(9) El doble mandato de la CBI, a saber, la gestión de la caza de las ballenas, por un lado, y su preservación, por otro, ha dado lugar durante años a posiciones muy encontradas entre los principales Estados «probáneros» y los «conservacionistas» favorables a la caza y los contrarios a ella. Los principales Estados «probáneros» favorables a la caza (como Japón, Islandia y Noruega) se han opuesto siempre a la moratoria y siguen cazando ballenas por razones que califican de científicas o en virtud de otras excepciones.

(10) La prohibición general de la caza comercial de ballenas en el contexto de dictada por la CBI es coherente con las políticas comunitarias, como se indica en la legislación arriba mencionada. Es necesario que, basándose en la información científica actualmente disponible, la CBI garantice la continuación de la moratoria. No obstante, en prácticamente todas las reuniones de la CBI desde la entrada en vigor de la prohibición, Japón ha propuesto enmiendas al «Reglamento» de la Convención plan de la CBI para autorizar la caza de ballenas en determinadas condiciones y de hecho levantar de hecho la prohibición para determinadas poblaciones. Por consiguiente, los 20 veinte Estados miembros de la UE que son miembros en de la CBI tienen que expresar, en cada reunión de la CBI, su posición respecto a las propuestas que son competencia comunitaria. Se prevé que esto ocurra nuevamente en la reunión anual de la CBI de 2008, que se celebrará en Santiago de (Chile), y en reuniones posteriores.

2 Alemania, Austria, Bélgica, Chequia, Chipre, Dinamarca, Alemania, Irlanda, Grecia, Eslovenia, España, Finlandia, Francia, Grecia, Hungría, Irlanda, Italia, Chipre, Luxemburgo, Hungría, Países Bajos, Austria, Portugal, República Checa, Eslovenia, República Eslovaca, Eslovaquia, Finlandia, Suecia y Reino Unido [c 1].

[Los Estados miembros deben enumerarse siempre en orden protocolario (LEI, 7.1.2). Para Chequia y Eslovaquia no resulta justificado usar la denominación oficial (LEI, 7.1.1).]
B On paper

Original

We are of the opinion that the report fulfils the requirements in terms of content in that it covers most points set out in the draft Article 13 model report.

However, we have the following comments and questions:

(1) It is well appreciated that, in annex to the report, tables with aggregated data from both the IGAE and the Inspectorates of the Autonomous Communities (IGCCAA) have been provided. However, my services would also be interested in receiving a consolidated document summarizing the relevant findings which are mentioned in the reports prepared by the various IGCCAA. Without wanting to question the administrative structure or the distribution of competences between the Central Administration and the Autonomous Communities (CCAA), such a consolidated document, accompanying the reports by the IGCCAA, could considerably simplify our analysis of those reports. This document should for example include information on the follow-up of systems audits, sample checks (irregularities and their nature) and an overall conclusion on the functioning of the management and control systems.

With regard to the sample checks pursuant to Art.10-12 of Reg.438/2001, these should be based on a representative sample of operations, implying a correct distribution over the various CCAA. In this respect, no data could be found for the Autonomous Community (CA) of Navarra (in annex VI of the aggregated data) and Murcia (in annexes II and VI). Moreover, the cumulative amount checked until 31/12/2007 and consequently the control percentage of expenditure declared seem to be erroneous for the O.P. for Objective 1 areas (CCI No.2000ES141PO001) as the amounts corresponding to CA Castilla La Mancha have been included twice.
Opinamos, tras ese examen, que el informe presentado cumple los requisitos de contenido necesarios ya que cubre la mayoría de los puntos establecidos en el proyecto de modelo de informe del artículo 13.

Debemos, no obstante, formular las preguntas y observaciones siguientes:

LEI (1) Es muy útil que como anexo del informe se hayan incluido algunos cuadros con datos acumulados tanto de la IGAE como de las Intervenciones Generales de las Comunidades Autónomas (IGCCEAA). No obstante, mis servicios desearían recibir también un documento recapitulativo en el que se resumieran las averiguaciones que se mencionan en los informes elaborados por las diversas IGCEAA. Sin querer cuestionar la estructura administrativa ni el reparto de competencias entre la Administración Central y las Comunidades Autónomas (CEAA), pensamos que un documento recapitulativo adjunto a los informes de las IGCEAA podría simplificarnos considerablemente el análisis de esos informes. Tal documento debería incluir, entre otras cosas, información sobre el seguimiento de las auditorías de sistemas y de los controles por muestreo (número y tipo de irregularidades detectadas), así como una conclusión general sobre el funcionamiento de los sistemas de gestión y control.

Por lo que se refiere a los controles por muestreo que disponen los artículos 10 a 12 del Reglamento (CE) n° 438/2001, tales controles deben basarse en una muestra de operaciones que sea representativa de las diversas CEAA. Debe señalarse a este respecto que no se ha podido encontrar ningún dato referente a las CGAA de Navarra (en el anexo VI de los datos acumulados) y de Murcia (en los anexos II y VI). Además, en el caso del P.O. de las zonas del objetivo n° 1 (CCI n° se le vale decir E000ES141PO001), el importe acumulado que se controló hasta el 31-12-2007 y, consiguientemente, el porcentaje de control del gasto declarado parecen estar equivocados ya que se han incluido dos veces los importes correspondientes a la Comunidad Autónoma (CA) de Castilla-La Mancha.
2 Document categories

These lists are taken from DGT's Communication 1489 of 2006 and they should not be considered either comprehensive or final.

A Quality control level 1 documents

- legislative texts: regulations, directives, recommendations, decisions of the Council, the EP, the Commission
- explanatory memoranda (CLWP)
- communications from and to the Commission
- white papers
- green papers
- Commission working papers
- reports on the follow-up of the European Council
- opinions of the National Parliaments and answers thereto
- documents linked to budgetary cycle
- notices for publication in the OJ
- infringements proceedings
- answers to written/oral questions
- procedural documents of the Court of Justice
- agreements with third countries
- correspondence with Member States or companies
- national legislation implementing EU legislation
- country strategy and programming papers
- calls for tenders and call for proposals: specifications and contracts
- competition tests
- documents linked to legal obligations: early warnings, decisions of the EEA Joint Committee, common positions, TARIC documents, UN/ECE regulations, EFTA documents, summary reports, etc.
- web pages
- press releases.
B  Quality control level 2 documents

- summaries of impact assessment
- financial statements
- technical annexes
- Commission staff working papers
- annexes to reports on the follow-up of the European Council
- documents linked to political priorities
- explanatory memoranda
- actions taken on Parliament resolutions
- Commission answers to CoA
- incoming correspondence from a Member State or company
- studies or papers from DG, internally drafted or subcontracted
- reports not required by legal acts
- administrative notices
- forms for staff
- Appointing Authority decisions
- other Administration documents
- leaflets
- guides on application for Community legislation
- presentation of the work of a DG to the public
- articles and speeches
- ScadPlus
- newsletters / news releases
- articles for publication
- Commission Bulletin
- meeting reports and notices
- consultation documents.
3 Bibliography

A Institutional


VALVERDE Íñigo et alii (2010), «Algunas consideraciones sobre la revisión», 34-38 in puntoycoma 117.
B External


MOSSOP, Brian (2001), Revising and Editing for Translators, St Jerome, Londres.


