

Elementary Linguistic Task Types

TAPICC Project, Workgroup 1

Version 1/14/2017

Synopsis

This document defines elementary linguistic task types. Each of these task types share common properties, such as language pair, volume, deadline, etc., but they are essentially different in their principal nature of activity. Please, note that this separation has to be done not because we want to create the most complete academic classification; the key distinction is that these types of activities have to be different by their nature and therefore by criteria important for business purposes, namely type of resource, productivity and cost.

They may also require different type and format of input and output data.

Of course, they may differ in other aspects, such as for example the type of deadline (which may be strict, flexible, or simply expected for crowdsourced jobs), but let's deal with the principal nature of these activities first.

Please, also note that we copywriting and adaptation task types are included even though they are not, strictly speaking, part of translation; the reason is that we have at least to distinguish between these tasks since often clients confuse them with translation.

When we are done with key definitions, we'll proceed with other parameters of these task types.

Elementary Linguistic Task Types, Core Definitions

Let's compose the list of all basic task types. The criteria for these task types is that each task type should be a certain well-defined activity with more or less uniform productivity, and most importantly, represent a separate type of activity which is different from all the other task types in the list.

Based on this criteria, we have composed the following list of elementary linguistic task types:

- Translation,
- Localization,
- Literary editing,
- Technical editing,
- Proofreading,
- Reconciliation,
- Review (also sometimes called "check" or "verification"),
- Review with LQA,
- Terminology extraction,
- Linguistic verification,
- Technical verification,

Service linguistic task, (here we will put such linguistic tasks as TM management or aligning, for example, as well as manual terminology extraction – whatever is hard to measure productivity or productivity varies)

MT post-editing,

Light MT post-editing,

Creating voice over script from audio/video,

Retyping handwritten text,

Copywriting,

Copyediting,

Technical writing,

Adaptation

Definitions

Let's define them for the purposes of our effort.

Translation, Task of rendering the source language content into target language content according to the target audience expectations, client specifications, and generally understood requirements. May be implemented in a variety of ways, tools and processes, may or may not include localization and/or adaptation. May be represented as “different” task, still be “just” translation. Example: “backtranslation”, which means take the target of a regular translation and ask someone else to translate it back to original language without looking at the original source text and without using translation memories (still translation).

Localization, Cross-cultural communication process of preparing locale-specific versions of a product or service, consisting of translation of textual material into the language and textual conventions of the target locale, and adaptation of nontextual materials as well as input, output, and delivery mechanisms to meet the cultural, technical, and regulatory requirements of that locale. (ASTM F2575)

Adaptation, Localization procedure through which the target language linguist knowledgeable about target market replaces a culture-specific aspect of a product, service, or document, such as market-specific information, a software utility, color, icon, or other cultural artifact from the source culture with an equivalent appropriate to the target culture to accommodate the expectations of the target audience. (ASTM F2575)

Literary editing, Editing translation (mostly without reference to the source) by native speaker of target language to improve its coherence, consistency and literary value, all aspects contributing to fluency, as well as certain adaptation to the target audience, as well as desired tone of voice (register).

- Technical editing,** Editing translation (always with reference to the source) by bilingual specialist translator for factual and terminological accuracy, to make sure the meaning is transferred correctly and accurately.
- Proofreading,** Reviewing and correcting translation by native speaker of target language (mostly without reference to the source) to improve its grammatical correctness, as well as spelling and elements of formatting. Much lighter than literary editing.
- Reconciliation,** Taking the input from independent reviewers (usually a linguist and a lawyer or two) and prepare the instructions that the original translator or a reviewer uses for adjusting the target text.
- Review** (also sometimes called “check” or “verification”),
Reviewing translation for technical and linguistic errors (such as not translated sentences, broken tags, punctuation, apparent inconsistencies, grammar, spelling). Such checks may be performed with special automated tools by non-native speakers. Reviewer may (more rare) or may not (more often) make changes in translated text, the result of the task in this case may be in the form of summary report, or sample review log report. This also includes the final check of layout, tables, numbers in the final promo materials or drawings etc. before submitting it to the client (may be done by PM or checker due to the fact that it is partially technical, but it is still a linguistic task).
- Review with LQA,** Review of translation without making any changes to translation being reviewed, but producing the Language Quality Assurance form instead, with details of errors and summary evaluation vs certain *LQA metrics*.
- Terminology work,** Harvesting new source or target terms, translating terminology. Often paid hourly rather than per word, since productivity may vary.
- Linguistic verification,** The same as *review*, but only for linguistics.
- Technical verification,** The same as *review*, but only for technical checks.
- Service linguistic task,** Any linguistic task that is hard to measure for productivity and hence it can only be compensated by the time linguist spent performing the tasks.
- MT post-editing,** Human post-editing of raw MT output with the goal to achieve human quality.
- Light MT post-editing,** @@Luigi - you have mentioned that there's widely adopted definition.
- Creating voiceover script from audio/video,**
Writing down the voice track in textual form.
- Retyping handwritten text,**
Typing handwritten text.

Copywriting,

Creating new highly literary, marketing or special demand audience source or target content according to the client specification and target audience expectations.

Copyediting,

Literary or technical editing of marketing, technical or special demand audience source or target content according to the client specification and target audience expectations. Such derivative task as “source review” (that helps in the production of source text that is more translation-friendly) is actually copyediting. Copyediting is completely out of scope of translation industry, but Source review isn't, while this is one and the same task type. That's perfect example of fusion between the world of writers and translators!

Technical writing,

Creating source or target language technical specifications to equipment, software, hardware or other product for the technical audience, without special literary requirements or expectations, where fluency may be average, but accuracy is more important.

Examples of linguistic workflows

In this section a few examples of linguistic workflows are given to illustrate some possible sequences of tasks. Of course, much more complex multilingual workflows may be drawn; but the point is that any and all steps of these workflows may be connected via the cloud and performed at different locations and organizations; that's why it is so important to *enable API connections between any and all of them*.

