Welcome!

And thank you for visiting my website.

This presentation will tell you what translation is...

...and what it isn't...

...and how I (and other translators) can help with translating your content to reach the markets and audiences you want to reach.

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Why I wrote this…

This is designed to help individuals and companies who may not know where to start when it comes to getting something translated.

A bit of additional background:

The idea for this presentation came from my own experience of attempting to find good tradespeople to come and do carpentry, plumbing and electrical work in my home and – as I'm not a carpenter, plumber or electrician – I didn't know what I should be looking for in a carpenter, plumber or electrician. There are websites out there that can help me, just as I hope my website will help you.

Translation – what it is and isn't

Translation =

transfer of WRITTEN content from one language into another

Translation is not the same as interpreting!

Interpreting = TRANSFER OF SPOKEN CONTENT FROM ONE LANGUAGE INTO ANOTHER

What I do

I do translation. Only translation. I work from French to English.

I specialise in the fields of medicine and pharmaceuticals, tourism and marketing.

IF YOU NEED AN INTERPRETER,
YOU CAN TRY THE FOLLOWING:

Chartered Institute of Linguists: www.ciol.org.uk

Institute of Translation and Interpreting www.iti.org.uk

Using a professional translator

Maybe you don't want to read the rest of this presentation or maybe you don't have time right now, so here are the main points:

❖ Use a professional translator if accuracy and/or appropriateness are even remotely important – we've all seen the howlers of when translation goes wrong. Why risk it?

❖ Translators generally translate INTO their mother tongue.

❖ A good translator is one who is qualified (Masters in Translation or Diploma in Translation [Dip Trans] are the usual qualifications but don't discount a translator who doesn't have one of these – proven experience can be just as good).

❖ A good translator knows about certain subjects and text types and won't be afraid to tell you if s/he is not the right translator for the job – ask if they can recommend someone more suitable.

❖ Translators generally charge per source word so they need to know how many words are in your text for translation.

❖ If you have any questions, ask your translator!

Why can't I just use Google Translate?

Google Translate is OK if you just want the gist of a text or a rough idea of its content but for anything more than that, you need a professional translator to ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of *your* content for *your* target audience.

A GOOD PROFESSIONAL TRANSLATOR WILL:

❖ Be a **skilled linguist** in both source and target languages.

❖ Translate **into his or her mother tongue** (normally).

❖ Have **subject knowledge and/or research skills** required to use vocabulary and terminology that is accurate and appropriate for your content.

❖ **Ask questions!** Please don't think a translator is rubbish if s/he asks questions – it just means that s/he wants to ensure that the translation is of the highest possible quality.

❖ **Proofread and check**. And then **proofread and check again**. We are sticklers for grammar, punctuation, spelling, formatting. Sometimes we dream about grammar, punctuation, spelling, formatting…

❖ **Stick to the agreed timeframe** for delivery of the translation.

So how do I find a good professional translator?

If you want a good professional translator from French to English, you can contact me.

If it's one of my areas of specialisation, I can talk to you about the project myself or, if not, the chances are I will know of an equally qualified and more suitable translator and I can put you in touch.

For all other language pairs, the best route is to try our professional associations:

Chartered Institute of Linguists: www.ciol.org.uk (Chartered Linguist Translator Register)

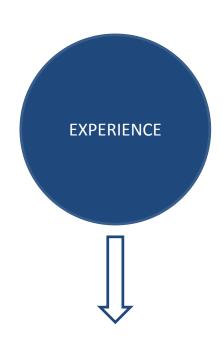Institute of Translation and Interpreting: www.iti.org.uk

What should I look for in a translator?

QUALIFICATIONS

EXPERIENCE

PROFESSIONALISM

Typically (in the UK) either:
- ❖ Masters in Translation or:
- ❖ Diploma in Translation (DipTrans)

Professional experience working in the same or similar field/subject area as the content you need translating

- ❖ Membership of professional body, e.g. CIOL, ITI
- ❖ Actively engaged in the industry and in continuing professional development

What does a translator need to know?

When you contact a translator about a potential job, it is helpful for the translator to know:

WHO
❖ Who the target audience is (i.e. who will read or have access to the translation)

WHAT
❖ What the text is or what it's about (e.g. is it a report, website content, a private email exchange, a legal document, a manual, a newspaper article…)
❖ What the translation will be used for (e.g. is the translation for information only, will it be published anywhere, will it be used in some legal capacity…)
❖ What file format(s) your text is in and the format you would like the translation to be in (if different)

WHEN
When you will ideally need the translation back by

WHERE
Where the translation will be used (e.g. in a publication, online, in a document…)

HOW
How many words (a rough estimate will be sufficient as a starting point but the more accurate the better)

And what do you need to know?

It is also helpful if you can send the translator the text or a sample of the text so that s/he can have a look to see if s/he feels suitably qualified to take the job on.

SSHHH! Translators who are members of the Chartered Institute of Linguists are bound by its professional code of conduct, and this includes respecting confidentiality.

As a VERY rough rule of thumb, a translator can usually translate around 1000-2000 words per day, although this can vary according to a number of factors, the main one being the complexity of the source text.

How much does translation cost?

Paying for translation is sometimes hard to justify because you know there are free tools out there.
But the costs – both financial and other – to fix a bad translation can be a lot, lot higher.

Things you need to know:

Most translators charge per source word or per thousand source words. That means they will ask you how many words are in your text (the source text) and they will multiply this by their per word rate.

Rates will vary depending on the translator's language pair (unusual language combinations can charge higher rates than more 'usual' language pairs) and on the complexity of the job.

As a rough guide, for French to English (a relatively common language pair in the UK), you can expect to pay around £65 to £100 per thousand words (i.e. £0.065 – £0.01 per source word). The higher end of this scale is usually charged when the text is highly technical or complex.

What is computer-assisted translation?

Computer-assisted translation (CAT) is software that can assist the translator. One of the main forms is the use of a Translation Memory (TM). A Translation Memory saves the translator's translation of a particular sentence or part of text so that, if that exact text comes up again in the same text or a later text, the translator can apply the translation that was used previously. If the new text is similar to an existing translated text, the TM will show the translator where the new text needs amending.

Advantage 1 – consistency within and across translated documents.

Advantage 2 – many translators will charge lower rates for texts which include a lot of repetition. If you're unsure, ask your translator if s/he uses a CAT tool and what his/her repetition rates are.

Remember: Using a CAT tool is NOT THE SAME as machine translation! CAT tools simply store and retrieve translations that an actual human translator has already done.

What if the translator I talk to doesn't use a CAT tool?

Many translators still don't use CAT tools; some translators might use a CAT tool for some clients but not others. It all depends on how much more efficient the use of a CAT tool will make the translator's work. For example, if a translator translates manuals which include a lot of repetition, or need frequent updates but a lot of the text remains the same, the translator will probably use a CAT tool. If, on the other hand, a translator translates a lot of advertising or marketing text – which by its nature is creative or new – there is not much point using a CAT tool as it won't improve speed or efficiency.

What do I need to send my translator?

Once you've found a translator and agreed a rate for your text, you can give the translator the go-ahead to start your translation job and send them:

- The FINAL version of the source text (or at least tell your translator if it's not the final version!)
- Any reference material or documentation that may be helpful for him/her e.g. if it's a catalogue of products, seeing images of those products can be really helpful, providing explanations for any in-house terminology or jargon, etc.

What's with the questions?

Remember: If translators send you questions about the text, please understand that they do this because they are trying to understand the text as the author originally intended it – it does not mean they don't know what they're doing! A good translator will research as far as possible but there are times when clarification or explanation is the only and best way to proceed.

Further information

"Getting it Right: A buyer's guide to sourcing and using translation services" is a really good guide to buying translation services. It can be found on the ITI (Institute of Translation and Interpreting) website and is available in a number of languages:

http://www.iti.org.uk/about-industry/advice-buyers/getting-it-right