InText
Russian and Ukrainian language specialists

InText Company
Editing Standard

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1. Introduction

This Standard sets out InText Translation Company's requirements and expectations in relation to editing, and supplements the acceptance, performance and delivery requirements described in the Terms of Cooperation with InText Company.

Editing here means checking a translation against the source text, making any required changes, followed by automated checking and proofreading of the changes made. Upon completion of the editing task, we expect to receive from the editor feedback on the translation quality and job organization, and we also rely on the editor's assistance in discussing the translation's finer points with the client.

The editor's main task is: to check whether the translation complies with the requirements of the client, and correct any discrepancies found within the time frame and the budget allocated for this purpose.

The editor's complimentary tasks are:

- To provide the translator and the project manager with feedback;
- To comment on the changes and to advise the project manager on the answers to the client's questions.

The most important criteria of a successful commercial translation are:

- It must comply with the client's requirements;
- It must be received by the planned deadline;
- It must be done within the agreed budget.

The expected speed of editing is taken as one hour per 900 source words.

Every editor may perform translation tasks; however, these are only reliable and competent translators that we involve in editing. Translators who perform editing task have priority in task assignment, and we consider them to be the core of our team.

2. Editor's Work under Standard Conditions

2.1. To Meet the Deadline and the Agreed Budget

Editing is one step in the overall process. It is quite possible that there may be a need for desktop publishers or proofreaders to work on the files after the editor, and they have their own work plans and schedules.

There is no single true and perfect translation, and almost every text can be improved. As a rule, editors are very conscientious specialists who always want to change something, check it once again, etc. This is good and correct practice, but only provided that the task is completed by the agreed deadline.

An editor should only make edits of which he is sure, which he is ready to justify and which he can complete in full by the deadline.

When performing translation work, much less editing work, it is impossible to foresee all the difficulties that may arise when working with a specific text, so sometimes the work proceeds more slowly than one would like, and vice versa, sometimes it is faster.

In the event that the deadline may be missed, or if the working time is much longer than planned, you should contact the project manager to coordinate further actions. In situations where you are 30% behind schedule, we recommend that you propose rescheduling the task.

For example, an editor may propose an option whereby he checks the completeness and accuracy of the translation, while the project manager reassigns the replacement of certain terms and the spelling check to another specialist. It is important that any proposal be specific and realistic, and the reasons compelling.

It is considered to be unacceptable when, despite the slowdown in work, the editor still manages to finalize the task on time by prolonging his working day or working on weekends without the consent of the project manager.

If major issues are found in the translation or you are over 30% behind schedule, you should immediately communicate this to the project manager through the Feedback section on the web forms.

2.2. Checking Compliance with Client's Requirements

The main goal of the editing phase is to ensure the quality of the translation. In accordance with ISO 9000 series specifications, quality is defined as “the degree to which a set of inherent (product's) characteristics fulfills requirements”. In practice, clients rarely provide detailed formalized requirements, but when they receive a finished translation, they always evaluate it in accordance with their expectations.

One important conclusion from this definition is that translation editing should be carried out from the viewpoint of the client's needs, not the editor’s preferences. The quality of the editor’s work is determined not by the number of edits, but by the suitability of the final file for transfer to the client.

Regardless of whether the formalized expectations of the client are available, the Company has adopted the following standard requirements on translations:

- Completeness and accuracy of translation;
- Consistency of terminology, wording, and style;
- Client's specific requirements;
- Compliance with the Rules of Grammar.

2.2.1. Completeness and Accuracy of Translation

The completeness of conveying the information contained in the source text should be fully implemented at the level of a text fragment. When working in Translation Memory systems, a fragment is represented by a segment, which most often consists of one sentence. Since such segments can be used repeatedly, one should aim for the fullest possible translation of each fragment.

Translation redundancy, which may perfectly suit the context of a given segment, improves the understanding of the Author’s intention and improves readability but can significantly distort the meaning of the translation if the segment is used in a different context later. Since such segments can be used repeatedly, one should aim to translate without redundancy.

Verifying translation accuracy is the main and most difficult part of the editor’s task. To avoid problems with the deadline, when beginning to check a large document it is recommended that you carefully check several fragments at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the document. This will allow you to more accurately assess the amount of effort required to process the entire file.

The editor's task in terms of checking completeness and accuracy is to understand the meaning of the source text and to make sure that it is conveyed in the translation correctly and completely, but without redundancy. It is important to remember that the requirement of accuracy of translation is difficult to formalize. It is closely connected with the choice of terminology and style, and even with the correction of errors in the source text.

In real conditions, aiming to rewrite the translation in your own way is impractical. With respect to each fragment, it is sufficient to answer two questions:

1. Is the phrase clear at first reading?
2. Does its meaning match the source text?

If both questions can be answered positively, most likely, this fragment does not require editing.

Upon detection of obvious or suspected errors (e.g. different numbers in different parts of the document, different spellings of names and positions) *in the source text*, you should record those points in a separate comment on the web forms for the project manager. Except for correcting obvious typos, you should not correct the meaning of the source text independently.

Please note! Comments should only be written in the Feedback section or in a separate "Form for questions to the manager and the client". It is best to group comments: it is easier for the project manager to send five questions in one message than in five different messages. You should not leave any comments or notes directly in the translation text or in the comments field in CAT tools. Such comments are difficult to track and extract to a single list for processing.

2.2.2. Consistency of Terminology, Wording, And Style

Consistency of terminology implies that the same concepts are conveyed by the same words throughout the package of files and, ultimately, the entire long-term project. If a term is used consistently, do not rush to change it: perhaps, following further review of the document, the translator's choice may seem quite reasonable, and if you do decide to replace the term throughout the document, it will be easy to do using the search function. Inconsistency of terms in a translation should be corrected even when each of them is acceptable in itself.

Please note! When deciding to change a term, the editor assumes responsibility for the correctness of its use, whereas on a general level, the translator is responsible for choosing the correct term.

Consistency of language is expressed in the fact that identical phrases in the source text have identical translations. If identical phrases in the source text are translated in different ways, first of all, it is essential to ensure consistency of the names of the constituent parts of the document and other documents included in the task that are referenced in the text, as well as standard expressions that begin the sections of structured documents.

Consistency of style means a standardized approach to the use of incentive/narrative sentences, personal/impersonal appeals to the reader, formal/informal tone, etc. As with issues relating to translation completeness and accuracy, significant problems with style can be found even during a quick check of the text. Therefore, when beginning to edit a package of files from several translators, it is recommended that you read some fragments from all the job components in order to gain an idea of the scope of the required corrections.

2.2.3. Client's Specific Requirements

Each client has its own special requirements, but not every client articulates them clearly. Therefore, by means of a job instruction or a checklist, the project manager sets out a list of points which require special attention. These requirements are of the highest priority. The most common options are listed below.

Client's Glossary

A client's terminology requirements can be set out in the form of a glossary. Wherever practicable, the terms suggested by the client should be used.

Sometimes a glossary (especially a large one) may contain inconsistent or incorrect translations of terms. It is recommended that the editor first of all ensures the accuracy and consistency of the translation, and if obvious errors are found in the glossary, prepare a polite and reasoned suggestion to the client on making changes.

Translation Memory (TM) and Reference Materials

Providing previously performed translations as a sample is a convenient and common form of transferring client's requirements. The Translation Memory provided by the client is actually the same reference material as the examples of previously performed translations.

First of all, it is essential to understand whether the client considers the materials provided to be ideal, i.e., whether the client is expecting a complete transfer of the terminology and language used to the new translation. As a rule, in such situations, the processing of complete matches with the translation memory is either not paid or expressly prohibited.

In the absence or insufficiency of materials received from the client, the editor has the right to focus on materials on the translation topic that are available to him or her. Such materials can be used both to find the right terminology and to make decisions on the wording and style of the text.

When searching for terminology, it is recommended that you focus on regulatory documents (for example, national standards) and keep links to the sources, in order to justify your choice if necessary.

This is a good practice, but do not overestimate it. First, extracting terminology on an unfamiliar subject area is a very time-consuming process that requires extra time and is primarily in the translator's area of responsibility. Secondly, there is no guarantee that the terminology carefully selected by the editor will be approved by the client.

Please note! Some clients deliberately use non-standard terminology, especially in marketing materials, to stand out from competitors.

As mentioned above, the key thing is to ensure the completeness, accuracy and consistency of a translation. Such a translation will make a favorable impression on the client, and individual terms can be replaced using the search function.

2.2.4. Compliance with Grammar Rules

A translated text that has been checked and, if necessary, corrected by an editor must comply with the spelling and punctuation rules of the target language. Any errors, especially those that can be detected by standard office spellchecking software, will naturally lead to dissatisfaction on the client's part and negatively impact their evaluation of the job as a whole.

As with other requirements, special attention should be paid to checking highly visible fragments, such as the cover page, headings, etc. In addition, you should carefully check the spelling of the client's company name, employee names, geographical names, numbers, and special terms.

The editor must provide text suitable for submission to the client.

In addition, special attention must be paid to the style of translation. It is important to distinguish between:

- stylistic errors – that is, a violation of the rules set forth in well-known and frequently used guides on style (for example, “Guide to Spelling and Stylistics” by Rosenthal);
- a situation where the client does not like the style, for example, when a specialist on his side knows how to make the text more stylistically accurate, readable, easy to understand and to learn from.

The editor must correct stylistic errors. As for the second case highlighted above, for technical texts we regard these as preferential changes that can be made if the time and budget allocated to the job allow.

2.3. Automated Quality Checking of Translation

Since translations are often performed under time pressure, the probability of errors in the final text is quite high.

The editor uses tools for automated quality checking of the translation in order to verify the quality of the translation according to certain criteria: localization of numbers, consistent translation of identical segments, compliance with the glossary, and so on. The company has adopted Verifika or Xbench software checkers as standard.

The report by the automated translation check software should be submitted on the web forms along with the edited translation.

2.4. Self-Checking of Changes

Worst of all is the situation where an editor him/herself makes mistakes and typos along with the necessary corrections. Therefore, his/her own changes require special care when checking. A significant proportion of editors' errors are phrases not showing grammatical agreement in corrected segments.

It is convenient to check your corrections in ChangeTracker software or Post-Edit Compare, tqauditor.com online service, or to edit them in SDL Trados Studio in Track Changes mode.

The comparison file from ChangeTracker, PostEdit or tqauditor.com should be uploaded to the web forms along with the edited translation.

2.5. Feedback

The editor is one of the most competent participants in the project – a person who delves deep into the specifics of the task. The editor's feedback on the quality of translation and work organization is important for the project as a whole and to minimize future effort by the editor.

Feedback on the quality of the translation is entered in the Translation Quality Control Form, which is generated automatically.

Feedback on the quality of work organization is entered in the web forms at the time the job is submitted.

2.6. Comments on Client's Corrections

Client-side corrections are translation corrections or questions on individual terms or segments. It is often the case that a client does not understand the target language and is worried that some part of the translation may be incorrect but is unable to check this. The client may ask about any corrections made and form an opinion on the quality of the translation from the answers given.

The editor explains the essence of the corrections to the client. If there is an error in the translation, he acknowledges this; if, on the contrary, the client’s revision introduces an error, he explains the error that has been made with the revision.

Comments should be prepared without sarcasm and without judging the person who has made the changes. The client wants to be confident of the quality of the translation: if the translation is of high quality, then you need only to explain why something has been written in one way rather than another.

3. Editor’s Interaction with Project Participants

The following section describes how project participants must interact to achieve the proper quality of the final product.

3.1. Vendor Coordinator

A vendor coordinator is a full-time employee who analyzes the source material and the client's requirements, selects participants to complete the task, and coordinates the job schedule.

As a rule, the vendor coordinator follows the requirements specified by the client, including those regarding the date of project delivery. The time allocated for completion of a job is divided among all the required tasks, i.e. OCR, translation, editing, layout, and others.

Unless agreed otherwise, when accepting a deadline commitment, the editor agrees to check the completeness, accuracy and consistency of a translation in accordance with the client’s special requirements and spelling standards, as well as to perform automated quality control and proofread the segments in which changes have been made upon completion of editing.

If the proposed deadline does not suit the editor, or the deadline proposed by the editor does not suit the client, the vendor coordinator may try arranging another option for completing the task:

- Draw up a schedule for partial delivery, where the editor starts working even before the translation is completed;
- Distribute the editing task between an editor, who focuses on checking the completeness, accuracy and consistency of the translation, taking into account the client's special requirements, and a proofreader, who checks compliance with spelling standards and proofreads any changes.

The vendor coordinator, together with the editor, can always either draw up a realistic plan to complete the job on time and with the specified translation quality, or offer the client another deadline.

3.2. Project Manager

The Project Manager liaises with the client and with the various project participants. His or her job is to make sure that the translation is being performed according to the agreed plan, and, if something goes wrong, to coordinate the efforts of the team to deliver the project on time, within budget and in accordance with the client's specific requirements.

The editor works with a high degree of uncertainty, since it is difficult to reliably predict the quality of the translation that will be submitted for editing, despite all the efforts made by the vendor coordinator.

If the editor faces an emergency situation, the general rule is to inform the project manager and jointly develop an action plan. See examples of some emergency situations in Section 4 “Editor’s Actions in Non-Standard Situations” and in Appendix 1 “Example of Correct Editor’s Work”.

3.3. Proofreader and Other Participants in the Next Phases of the Job

Sometimes, when the editing task has been completed, specialists who monitor compliance with spelling standards and the client's special requirements are involved in the project. This can include a copy-editor, a proofreader, and others.

If this approach to project organization is used, the changes made by these specialists are displayed to the editor automatically, as sometimes a highly specific industry term or technique may look like a mistake to the proofreader when in fact no mistake has been made.

In any event, the editor cannot be held responsible in such cases. If the error can be detected before the translation is sent to the client, this will only be an additional positive point and will increase the likelihood of receiving job on this project in the future.

4. Editor's Actions in Non-Standard Situations

4.1. Unacceptable translation quality? Inform the project manager

A translation of unacceptable quality is a translation which will require significantly more editing time than planned. For example, if editing three hundred words of translation requires more than half an hour, this is a translation of unacceptable quality.

Using the web forms, report that you have received a translation of inappropriate quality with a few examples of blatant errors and your suggestions, for example:

This translation deviates from the glossary in every term, in addition to which, in the first three pages the translator did not correct fuzzy matches at all. I can spend another hour on this before my next task; I think this would be enough for acceptable quality. Would you give me another hour? While I'm waiting, I'm checking the discrepancies with the glossary.

Start correcting the most serious mistakes while the project manager prepares an answer to your suggestion: correct the mistranslated terms throughout the document, numeric inconsistencies, etc.

The company is focused on long-term cooperation both with clients and partnering editors. You should not turn a blind eye to translation errors, but you should also not try to correct them through excessive efforts.

If you spend the whole night on work for which the client pays for one hour, and report this only upon delivery, when the job may already be delayed, the project manager will be in a hopeless situation: the budget has been exceeded and the deadline has been broken. It is unlikely that he or she will appreciate your "heroic" work, and agreeing on a higher fee will not be possible. To avoid this situation, it is worth studying the task files in advance and during the project manager's working hours.

If you say nothing and do the work on a "do as much as I can" basis, this will also damage the business: your work has not been completed, although the project manager thinks that everything is fine. Most likely, we will receive a complaint from the client, or find an unusable Translation Memory in the next task within the framework of this project. The project will either come to an end or become incredibly inconvenient for translation: after all, errors that you did not report before will remain in your Translation Memory.

If you simply refuse a task, you will be letting the project manager down. We will waste time on a hasty search for at least some kind of replacement, which means that the quality of the end translation will be many times worse than what we and you could achieve together.

4.2. Are there lots of minor errors in the translation? Inform the project manager

Formal errors are errors that are identified by automatic translation quality checkers (characters instead of tags, absence of tags, numeric inconsistencies, etc.).

Report this on the web forms if there are so many errors that you will not have time to check compliance with the client's other requirements and correct these errors.

It is important to check completeness, consistency and compliance with the client's special requirements for the task. Indeed, this is what we expect from the editor in the first place, because the proofreader or automatic translation quality check specialist will not be able to do this.

If, without saying anything, you spend all the time placing tags and then submit the task, your work has not been completed, and you have let the project manager down. Most likely, he will find some missed errors during the final check just before delivery to the client, and will be forced to rush into finding a way of correcting the errors.

If you inform us in advance, we will most likely be able to agree, for example, with the proofreader about working late at night or at the weekend, so that you can do your job and ignore tags and phrases not showing grammatical agreement. Another specialist will then clean up any formal and spelling errors. Most likely, by the time of delivery to the client, the translation will be in much better shape.

4.3. The terminology is "basically correct, but if there is a complaint, we will not be able to defend ourselves"?

If a term does not contradict the glossary and is used without obvious errors, leave it as is. If there is some time left after going through the text, you can always go back and look for better options.

Don't forget about the time budget: if you spend time studying the alternatives to acceptable terms near the beginning of the document, you may not have enough time to correct gross errors later on.

If there is a lot of dubious terminology in the Translation Memory but there is no glossary or it does not include such terms, inform the project manager about this and suggest creating a glossary. The work on agreeing terminology will then be explicit and separated from the editing of specific material.

4.4. Client's materials contain errors? Inform the project manager

Sometimes it is difficult or impossible to use materials received from a client:

a) The glossary contains grammatical errors, words of a completely general nature are used as terms, the glossary includes numbers, prepositions, articles, etc

b) The Translation Memory provided by the client contains an inaccurate, inconsistent, or erroneous translation, stylistically unacceptable segments, etc.

c) There is no consistency between the glossary provided by the client, the translation memory, and other reference materials.

The first thing to do in this situation is to notify the project manager of the problem. He will communicate this information to the client or suggest an approach based on past experience within the project. Since the deadlines are often tight, the client’s response may come after completion of the job.

Two approaches are usually taken:

- The client cancels the requirement for mandatory use of the glossary, requiring it to be used "where appropriate".
- The client insists on mandatory usage of the glossary for the current task; if there are any errors in the glossary, the editor needs to provide a list of the errors with the correct versions and justifications of the choices made.

The editor acts within the budget and time allocated to a specific task. Changing the terminology established by the client for the project is a separate piece of work that can be discussed with the project manager.

4.5. Abnormal situation at work or at home? Inform the project manager

Notify the project manager as soon as possible about situations that adversely affect your performance. It is much more effective to work out a solution together: some tasks may be reassigned and others may be postponed, leaving you a smaller number of editing jobs to do. As a result, all the work can be delivered on time with acceptable quality with little extra effort.

If you decide to be a hero and work when suffering from a fever, with a sick child, or on an IV drip in hospital, you are letting the project manager down. In addition, this act of heroism will not be appreciated, because the quality of work is bound to suffer and there is a high risk of missing the deadlines. As a result, the editor will feel that his hard work is not being recognized, and the project will be at risk of cancellation.

Attachment 1

Example of How an Editor Should Work

To illustrate our expectations, we analyze an emergency situation in the translation of a pharmaceutical project.

The task consists of 3,300 new words, 174 complete matches, and 893 words of fuzzy matches. This is the first task for a new project.

The translator receives the task at 3:30 p.m. on Thursday and is given a deadline of 10:00 a. m. on the following Wednesday. He also has quite a heavy workload of other tasks from us. On the day of delivery, he writes a few minutes before the agreed deadline to say that he is delaying the delivery by two hours.

A delay of two hours reduces editing time by a third, from six to four hours. The project manager finds out from the editor whether he can allocate another two hours, but due to his heavy workload, the editor can only allocate one extra hour so as not to jeopardize his next job, which has tight deadlines. The project manager tries to agree extra three hours with the client, but the client gives him only two and insists on that delivery time. As a result, there is very little time left for editing and delivering the file.

Half an hour after receiving the translation, the editor reports problems with the translation:

- It has been done extremely carelessly;
- The signs "≤" and "≥" were tags in the source text, while in the translation, they are inserted as characters;
- There are numerous untranslated fuzzy matches;
- There are numerous instances of missing grammatical agreement.

The editor and the project manager agree that the editor will check the terminology, the correct communication of the meaning, the conversion of units of measurement and compliance with the client's special requirements for the task. The issues relating to tags and spelling errors will be checked by an automatic quality control specialist.

At the same time, it is only possible for the client to extend the deadline by one hour: the client manager needs to receive the files, convert them and hand over the translation package in different languages to his client by the end of the working day.

An analysis of the situation places the blame on the translator, who committed three violations at once:

- Late delivery of the translation;
- Unauthorized removal of tags from the text;
- False confirmation that automated quality control has been performed in the checklist on the web forms.

At the same time, the editor has done a good job:

- Immediately reported the problems with the translation, giving examples of errors, provided suggestions on rectifying the situation, and commented on his time constraints due to his next task;
- Completed the agreed part of the job without being distracted by other issues, which on this occasion were to be corrected by another specialist;
- Managed to deliver the job fifteen minutes early, thereby giving the next specialist a better chance of completing his job.

In a difficult situation, the joint work of the editor, project manager and other specialists allowed us to bring the translation quality up to an acceptable level.

Attachment 2

Editor's Declaration

Please read the statement below, print and sign this sheet, and email it to us as a scanned image or a digital photograph.

I declare that I have read InText Company's Editing Standard and will comply with it when performing tasks received from InText Company. I am also liable for the quality of each job performed in an amount not exceeding the full amount of the fee, if an analysis of non-conforming products reveals that the editor has not fully complied with the obligations and did not provide advance notification of this.

I hereby consent to the collecting, processing and use of my personal data in accordance with the Law of Ukraine "On the Protection of Personal Data".

Full Name: ____

Date: __________________

Signature: __________________