

## Approaches to Quality Assurance in Translation

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ATA Conference, New York  
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### Guess Who

- Years of professional translation experience: 15
- Years of ATA certification English into German: 15
- Years of providing language services at Austria's central bank: 12



## Anyone against Quality Assurance?

### Translation revision

- Self-revision
  - Other-revision (e.g. peer revision)
  - Bilingual/Comparative revision
  - Monolingual/Unilingual revision
  - On paper
  - On screen
  - SME review (validation by client)
- Editing**
- Substantive editing
  - Mechanical editing
- Proofreading**



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## ATA Conference Quotes

**Our eye frgoievs evyertnihg, our ear forgives nothing.**  
**(Edith Grossman)**

**Cutting the ear out of the process is (strange).**  
**(Michael W. Collins)**

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## Balancing Risks against Resources

**Default: Revision YES**

EN 15038

“The TSP (translation service provider) shall ensure that the translation is revised.”

Reviser = “person other than the translator”

Task: “examine a translation for its suitability for purpose,” compare ST and TT and recommend corrective measures.

**Default: Revision YES/NO**

e.g. Martin (2008)

“Revision is a valuable and costly resource best applied selectively.”

Errors and not infelicities sink translations and their makers.

Weigh the need for revision against the known purpose of the text and the known reliability of the translator.



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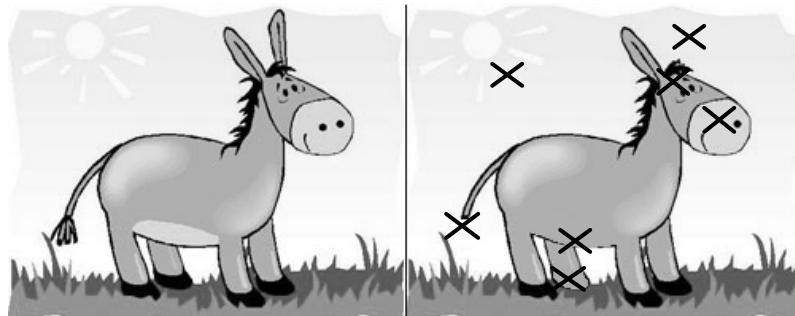
## Revision's (Minor) Role in Quality Assurance

Quality factors in ideal descending order of importance:

1. Training of translators
2. Assigning the right translator to a given text
3. Giving clear pre-translation instructions
4. Revision by a second translator
5. (Providing a clear revision brief)

Mossop (2009)

## Revision: As Easy as Child's Play?

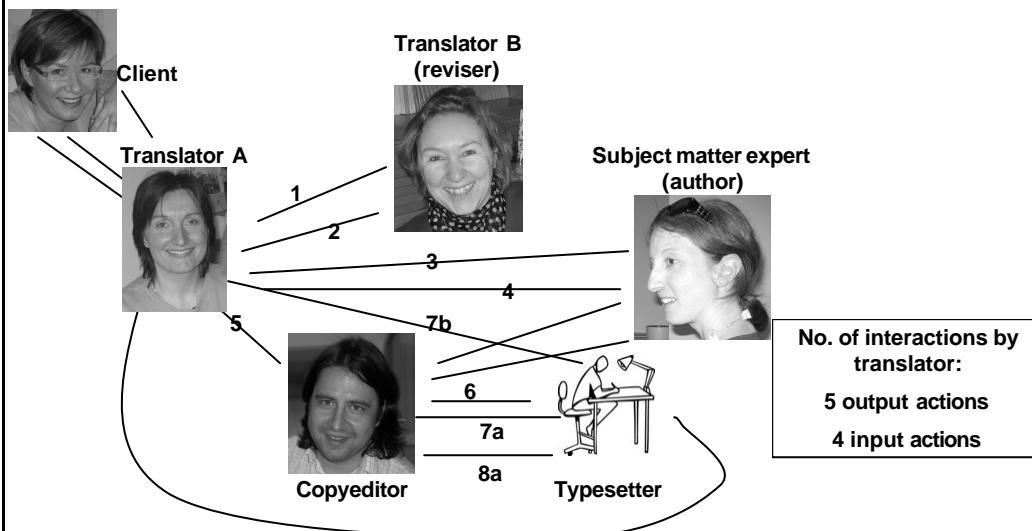


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## OeNB Process for Translated Publications



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## OeNB Process for Translated Publications



Client

Translator B  
(reviser)

# Revision is a question of human relations

(Kaiser-Cooke, 2004)



Copyeditor



Typesetter

6  
7a  
8a

9b

No. of interactions by translator:  
5 output actions  
4 input actions

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## Check for...

## Kaiser-Cooke (2004)

### ✓ ST comprehension

Logical conclusions, domain-specific knowledge



✓ TT miscellaneous : e.g. names, figures, spelling, typos, style guide

### ✓ TT Meaning

Lexis, coherence, localization, syntax, divergence from ST

### ✓ TT Style

Text conventions, register, connotations, collocations, punctuation

### ✓ TT Terminology

Nonequivalent, unidentified term, local term

### ✓ TT Miscellaneous

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## More Recommendations

1. Make the text suitable for its purpose
2. Select the quality level up to which you will revise
3. Do not revise to a higher level than is needed
4. Revision is reading, not writing
5. Default action: do nothing
6. Keep checking and correcting separate in your mind
7. Avoid annoying those you revise
8. Use different degrees of revision
9. Watch your attitude

(Mossop, 2009; slightly adapted)

### Quality Standards

**Accuracy**  
ST comprehension  
TT design

**Readability**  
language  
structure

**Consistency**  
Publication quality  
⇒ Communicative effectiveness

(based on Schuch, 2004)

Serving...

**first the reader,**

**then the writer,**

**then any style rules.**

Carol Fisher Saller (2009)

## Proper Words in Proper Places (Wood, 2002)

German → English

- **Verbalize**
- **Depassivize**
- **Colorize**
- **Reorder**
- **Remap**
- **Clarify**

**Hands-On**

**Brief exercise: Verständlichkeit**

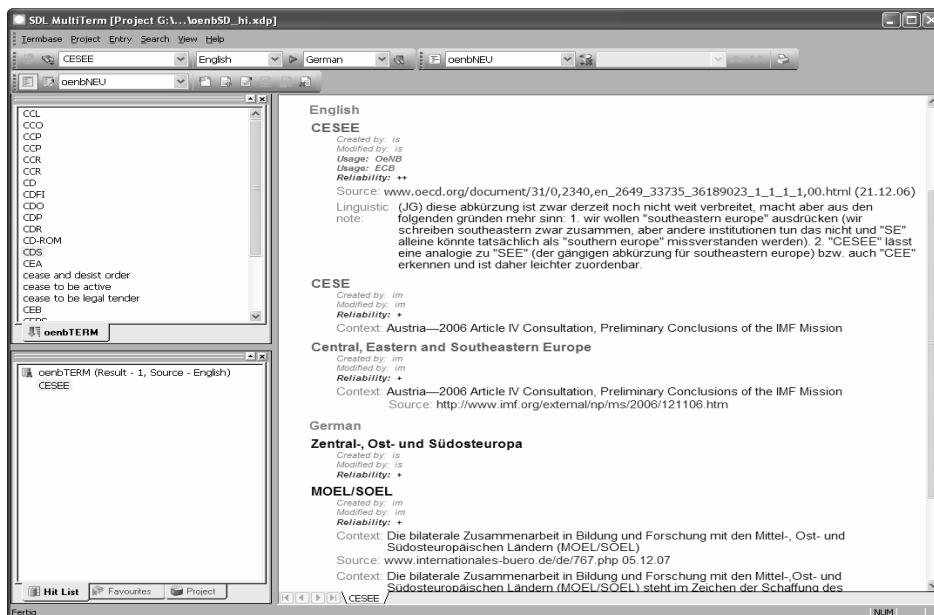
## Authoring, Translation, Revision, Editing, QA Toolkit

- Comment function
- Highlighting/Color coding
- In-house EN Style guide
- BBk/ECB/OeNB DE style guide
- Style guide for authors
- Style guide for freelance translators
- Checklists
- Checklist for SMEs
- List of “Austriazismen”
- “Group genius”
- (Revision) excercises
- Continuing education
- Translation Memories
- Terminology database
- References (e.g. Chicago Manual of Style, DUDEN, BBI ...)
- Internet
- Macros
- Feedback loops (e.g. translator, reviser, SME, freelance translators)
- New workshop:  
**Zielgruppengerechtes Schreiben für Fachautoren**
- Evaluation matrix

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## Possible Ways of Other-Revision

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I read the target text (TT) alone without the source text (ST) and make changes (A)</li> <br/> <li>2. I read the TT alone, refer to the ST when I think there may be a problem and make changes (B)</li> <br/> <li>3. I compare the ST with the TT and make changes (C)</li> <br/> <li>4. I read the TT, make changes, then compare the ST with the TT and make additional changes if necessary (D)</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. I compare the ST with the TT, make changes, then read the TT and make additional changes if necessary (E)</li> <br/> <li>6. I read the ST, then compare the ST with the TT and make changes, finally read the TT again and make additional changes if necessary (F)</li> <br/> <li>7. I read the ST, then read the TT and make changes, then compare the ST with the TT and make additional changes if necessary (G)</li> </ol> |
|--|---|

based on Robert (2008)

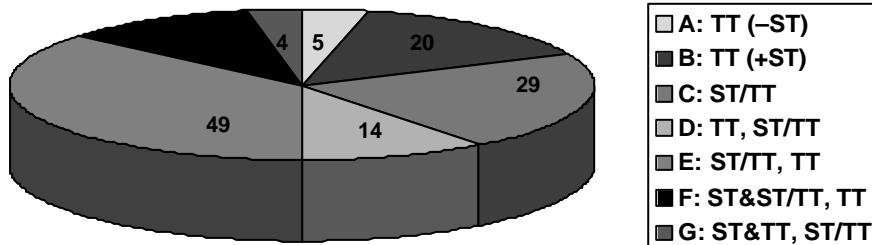
## Survey Results (Robert, 2008)

1. Reviser compares ST with TT, makes changes, then reads the TT and makes additional changes if necessary (E) (56%) {36%}.
  
2. Reviser reads the TT, makes changes, then compares ST with TT, and makes additional changes if necessary (D) (21%) {15%}.
  
3. Reviser compares ST and TT and makes changes (C) (12%) {20%}.
  
4. Reviser reads the TT alone, refers to ST when she thinks there may be a problem, and makes changes (B) (5%) {29%}.

Robert (2008); values in () refer to 2006 survey, in {} to 2007 survey.

## Revision Practices, October 2009 Survey

What is your standard modus operandi when you are asked to revise a translation?

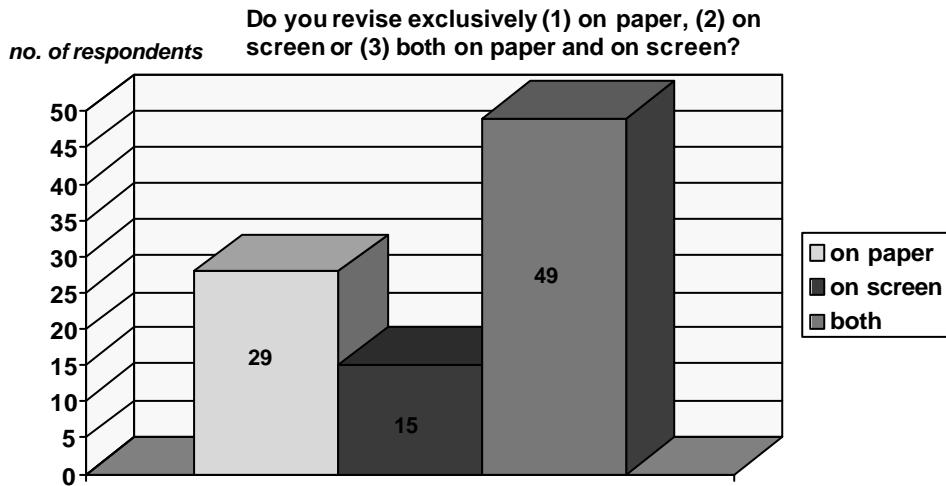


91 respondents (80 in-house, 11 freelance translators)

## Top Three Revision Methods

1. Compare the ST with the TT, make changes, then read TT and make additional changes if necessary
2. Compare the ST with the TT and make changes
3. Read the TT alone, refer to the ST when there might be a problem and make changes

## Revision Practices, October 2009 Survey



## Revision Practices, October 2009 Survey – Comments

- Do I know the translator?
- Consider translator's preferences (paper/screen)
- Translator has the final word
- Time constraints
- Text length and complexity
- Service level required
- Highlight tricky passages on ST printout
- Late-stage revisions only on paper
- Bilingual (translation memory) files

## Assessing Revision Quality

Arthern (1983, 1987, 1991)

- X substantive error left unchanged or introduced by reviser
- F formal error left unchanged
- U unnecessary change made
- C necessary correction or improvement in readability

$$S = X + F/2 + U/3$$

Or

$$S = X + F$$

## Ethical Dilemmas and Loyalty Conflicts

- Source text author
- Client
- Translation agency
- Target text reader
- Translator
- Reviser
- Self!
- Subjects in a text
- Organization

- Economic demand for speed
- vs.
- Ethical demand for thoroughness, reliability or quality

Künzli (2008)

## The Future?

- **Demise of the classical translator**
- **Emergence of the “treditor”**
- **Will edit and recreate text in different languages**

**Karl-Johan Lönnroth, Director GD Translation, European Commission (2008)**

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Thank you!

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