



THE ABC'S OF QUALITY EDUCATIONAL TRANSLATIONS

(That every education professional should know)



MADE BY. AUSTRALIS LOCALIZATION

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As societies erase geographical boundaries through the digital world, there are more and more students from different countries wishing to join prestigious schools in all fields and educational levels in order to excel academically and **better prepare themselves** for an increasingly competitive environment.

In response to this situation, institutions around the world have begun to **adapt** their content to more languages than they normally work with. This is both an **area of opportunity** in the business model for private schools, as well as the natural response of government institutions to provide **quality education** to this group of new students.

At Australis we are clear that the future is already with us; that is why in our **more than 10 years of experience** we have worked with teachers and schools on all continents providing quality translations that accurately reflect the content of their courses. In this way, we have been able to compile all our knowledge into three precise instructions that we call the **A-B-C's of Quality Educational Translations** that every education professional should know.

We hope you enjoy it!



A IS FOR ADAPTATING



(to the reading and reasoning level of your students, while still creating content that is challenging but appropriate)

Some professional textbooks require a certain level of **proficiency** to be understood, as may be the case for technical or legal documents. However, when we are responsible for teaching other people, the first thing we should do before translating didactic material is to **analyze the level of reading and comprehension** that they possess; this in order to make sure that any content we translate and localize is really suitable for our students.

For this purpose, we should first **find reference material other than our source material**, such as textbooks written in the target language. In this way, the translation activity will have a technical reference base with which we can make a comparison between the source content and the content already written in the target language. It is important to mention that if we skip this step, we may commit the error of translating material that will not be suited to the student's profile.

The next step is to proceed with the translation project based **on the thematic nature of the text**. Here, the reference material is again useful since, depending on the course, certain indispensable technicalities can be expected.

Finally, the **proofreading** process must be performed. For example, if you start a translation project with our team of professionals at Australis, once the material has been translated, we measure its accuracy by having it **reviewed by one of our expert native speakers** in the selected language. Through this activity, we not only compare the finished translation with the source and reference material, but we can also corroborate whether the localization is **truthful** according to the content provided or whether it maintains a **challenging** level of instruction for the student without being excessive or insufficient.



B IS FOR BUILDING



(the right tone and vocabulary for your content to provide educational materials that speak directly to the student)

Building the right tone and vocabulary into a translation project is as important as adapting to the reading level of the student. Why? Because it is the author's **behavioral guidance** to the student and therefore the path that leads to correct teaching.

As mentioned in Point A, **reference material is helpful in understanding both the reading and the student**; for example, if the content is for elementary school-age students, the tone can be friendly but formal without being too rigid; whereas for college students, a formal tone with more complex vocabulary is expected.

Thus, the key tip for teachers who wish to translate their content materials either for their students or for colleagues in their field, is to understand that **depending on the context, there is a correct way of expressing oneself**.

Our general recommendations on this point are to **avoid regionalisms** (unless you are looking for a localization for a particular region, and even then, we do not fully recommend this practice), to **take into account the vocabulary associated with the reading level** and not to lose sight of the activity of **proofreading** the translation to corroborate that the tone and vocabulary are appropriate.



C IS FOR CHALLENGES



(and how to successfully overcome them
with accurate translations)

As we mentioned at the beginning of the reading, **at Australis we have 10 years of experience translating academic content**, both for teachers and institutions as well as for students, which is why we have encountered a series of common challenges that we would like to share with you.

The first challenge is the **correct use of units of measurement and dates according to the geographical context of the language**; if we are in the process of translating educational material created in US English into Mexican Spanish, would you know how to correctly express the unit of mass? is it kilograms or pounds in Mexico? Likewise, if you were to order an activity for a specific date, what format would you use? DD/MM/YYYY or MM/DD/YYYY? Understanding that across countries and cultures there are different forms of measurement and dates that are commonly accepted will bring us closer to a more accurate and natural translation for our reader.

The second challenge is associated with **style**. For example, if you were to teach a language or even an art class, you should keep in mind that **what is considered an appropriate style in English may not be the case in Spanish or German**. This applies especially to topics such as humor, proverbs and emotional statements because there are artful and sensitive choices to be made between a more or less literal translation and a culturally sensitive one.

The third and last challenge is that of **idiomatic expressions and wordplay**. Similar to the previous case, what may sound good in one language may sound strange, awkward, incomprehensible or meaningless to another. What is the solution? Ideally, the translation should be done in such a way that the intention of the original message is respected, but this could distort the context in which the topic is presented, so it is always good to use annotations in case there are ideas that do not have an immediate equivalent or simply do not fit in with the general content. Another option is to look for or generate phrases similar to those in the text, but this is up to the translator and must fit with the teaching objective.



FINAL WORDS

Being a teacher involves more than one might suppose; **it is truly a profession that pushes the limits of vocation and knowledge to the maximum**, so achieving mastery in such activity is a challenging task to say the least.

At Australis, we understand this situation since **we are constantly in the process of learning to improve our translations as well as teaching our collaborators**. Thus, we can offer you a helping hand when it comes to accurate and truthful translations so that you will always be at the top of your field.

If you want to provide education that transmits quality, choose translators specialized in learning, and thus, **choose Australis**.

