



Lesson 3: Translator guidelines

Lesson overview

Screen 1

Welcome	Screen
<p>As a technical translator myself, I know what a difficult job it is. You often don't have access to the same subject matter experts or reference material as the technical writer, yet you are expected to do a similar job. In this final lesson of Module 2, we'll take a look at what you can realistically expect from a translator and at the information a translator needs in order to work productively.</p>	

Screen 2

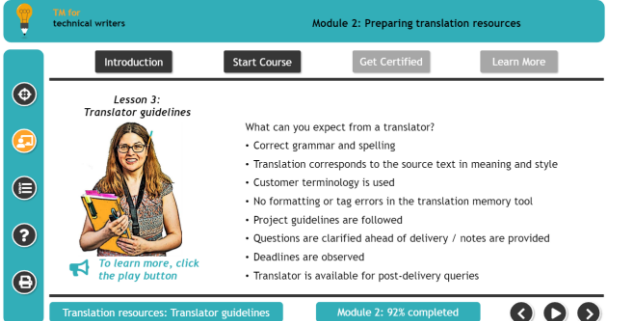
Objectives	Screen
<p>On completion of this lesson, you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• List at least three requirements that a translator can be expected to meet• Identify at least three things that a translator needs to successfully complete a translation assignment• Create project guidelines to share with your translators	





Lesson Content

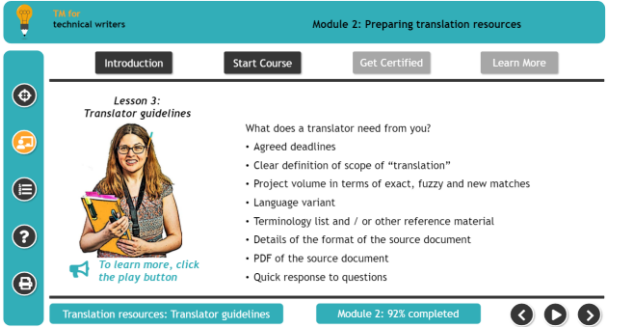
Screen 1

What you can expect from a translator	Screen
<p>Translators usually have several clients. But there is no one size fits all. That's why it's important to talk to your translators about your expectations before beginning a translation project. That said, here are some general requirements that a translator can be expected to meet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct grammar and spelling are fundamental requirements. • The translation should always accurately reflect the meaning and style of the source text. • The translator must follow any terminology that you provide. • There should not be any formatting or translation memory tag errors in the final translation. • The translator must follow your project guidelines. • If either the content to be translated or the project guidelines are unclear, the translator should send their queries ahead of delivery. • Notes should be provided with a delivery for items that could not be clarified ahead of time. • Translators must stick to agreed deadlines. If this is not possible, then this should be clarified as far in advance of the project deadline as possible so that alternative arrangements can be agreed. • Once a project has been submitted, the translator must remain available for any queries or if they are taking a well-earned break, at least indicate when they will be available again. <p>Of course, translators have expectations, too. Let's take a look at those now.</p>	





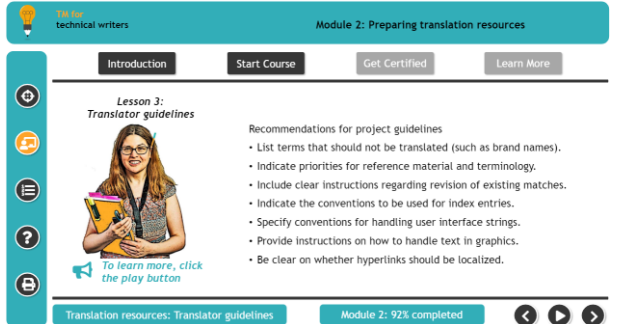
Screen 2

What a translator needs from you	Screen
<p>Here's how you can become a preferred client for your translator.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always agree deadlines up front. Be realistic with your turnaround times and be willing to compromise where possible. Remember, the translator has other clients, too. • Every client has their own understanding of the word “translation”, so be very clear about the scope. Do you just want “a translation”? Do you want “a translation and proofreading”? Maybe you want “a translation and a peer review” or “a translation and a layout review”. Also, be clear as to whether an internal check will follow at your company or not. Translators sometimes do less (and charge less) because they assume the work will be checked anyway. • Indicate the project volume in exact match words, fuzzy match words and no matches. The effort required for “50 pages” can vary a lot depending on font size, line spacing, and numerous other factors. • Be precise about the language variant. Do you need US or UK English? European or Brazilian Portuguese? This can make a big difference in terms of wording, spelling, and punctuation. • Translators are all-rounders and do not always have the specific product knowledge of a technical writer. So, provide a terminology reference if you have one, and include reference documents if available. • Always indicate the format of the source document to be translated. Even if the translation will be completed in a translation memory tool such as Trados Studio, the file format can have implications in terms of how easily the content can be edited in the translation memory tool. • Provide a PDF of the source document. Translators want to know what they are getting into. Information such as a “a text about engineering” is just not specific enough. Also, during the translation phase, the translation memory tool does not provide context such as images or page layout. So, a PDF of the source document is always very useful. • Finally, answer questions promptly! If the translator is stuck on an issue that impacts the entire document, long delays in answering questions can delay the entire translation project. 	





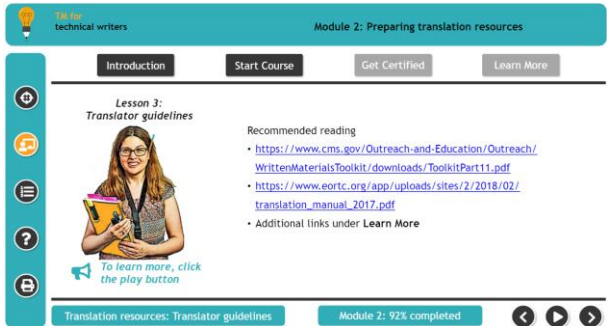
Screen 3

Translator guidelines	Screen
<p>Now you and your translators know what to expect from each other. That's great! But translation projects can also have specific requirements that a translator cannot reasonably be expected to know. So, here are some recommendations for project guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List terms such as brand names that should not be translated (or include these in your terminology reference). • Indicate priorities for reference material and terminology. This is important especially if the reference material is inconsistent or uses different terminology to the terminology reference. • Include clear instructions regarding revision of existing matches. Some customers are happy for translators to make stylistic changes where they see fit. In other cases, such changes are strictly prohibited. • Indicate the conventions to be used for translating index entries. There are different conventions out there so be clear on what you need. • Also include conventions for handling user interface strings in documents. This varies enormously from client to client. Should strings be translated? If yes, is a reference available containing the translated strings? If the user interface isn't translated, should the translator add the translation in brackets after the original term for clarity? Are screenshots available in the document for all user interface items? These are useful for context. Does the translator need to consider length restrictions? This is a topic that causes a lot of issues so be clear about what you need. • Provide instructions on how to handle text in graphics. If translators should translate flowcharts for example separately and provide a legend, specify this. Remember also to include this extra work in the project scope. • Finally, hyperlinks: should these be localized (for example, changing bmw.com to bmw.fr) or should they be left as is? <p>If you want a smooth translation workflow, it is worth thinking about these things upfront.</p>	 <p>The screenshot displays the 'Lesson 3: Translator guidelines' interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Introduction', 'Start Course', 'Get Certified', and 'Learn More'. Below this, the lesson title 'Lesson 3: Translator guidelines' is shown. A woman is featured holding a book, with a play button icon and the text 'To learn more, click the play button'. The main content area lists 'Recommendations for project guidelines' with several bullet points: 'List terms that should not be translated (such as brand names)', 'Indicate priorities for reference material and terminology', 'Include clear instructions regarding revision of existing matches', 'Indicate the conventions to be used for index entries', 'Specify conventions for handling user interface strings', 'Provide instructions on how to handle text in graphics', and 'Be clear on whether hyperlinks should be localized'. At the bottom, there's a progress bar showing 'Module 2: 92% completed' and navigation arrows.</p>





Screen 4

Closing	Screen
<p>The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services have some excellent general guidelines on the translation process, as do the European Organization for Research and Treatment of Cancer. I've also included some additional resources in the Learn More section, which you can take a look at once you complete this lesson.</p>	

Lesson Summary

Summary	Screen
<p>Translators should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use correct spelling, grammar, terminology, and formatting • Retain source text meaning and style • Follow project guidelines • Ask questions before delivering on time <p>Technical writers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree deadlines and be flexible • Clearly define “translation” • Describe volume in matches • Provide source text PDFs, terminology, and other references • Answer questions promptly • Provide project specific guidelines 	