
Translation, interpreting and related technology — Vocabulary

*Traduction, interprétation et technologies apparentées —
Vocabulaire*

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ISO copyright office
CP 401 • Ch. de Blandonnet 8
CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva
Phone: +41 22 749 01 11
Fax: +41 22 749 09 47
Email: copyright@iso.org
Website: www.iso.org

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 37, *Language and terminology*, Subcommittee SC 5, *Translation, interpreting and related technology*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

This document is a compendium of vocabulary used in International Standards on translation, interpreting and related technology. It was compiled with a view to coordinating usage of terms and definitions in these standards in future. Some of the concepts in these domains are referred to in different ways by practitioners. It is not expected that these differences will disappear in the short term; however, it is likely that, in the long term, consistency in terms and definitions across the related ISO documents will have a standardizing effect in practice. For example, “revision” is the preferred term in International Standards on translation for the following concept: “examination of the entire target language content against the source language content to ensure linguistic accuracy and faithfulness to the source language content.” In practice, this concept is referred to interchangeably as “revision”, “editing”, “proofreading” and “review”, yet these designate other concepts in the ISO documents for this domain.

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Translation, interpreting and related technology — Vocabulary

1 Scope

This document provides the vocabulary for translation, interpreting and related technology standards.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1 Key concepts

3.1.1

language

systematic use of sounds, characters, symbols or signs by which to communicate

3.1.2

content

information in any form

EXAMPLE Text, audio, video, etc.

3.1.3

source language

language (3.1.1) from which content (3.1.2) is translated (3.1.7) or interpreted (3.1.9)

3.1.4

target language

language (3.1.1) into which content (3.1.2) is translated (3.1.7) or interpreted (3.1.9)

3.1.5

source language content

content (3.1.2) to be translated (3.1.7) or interpreted (3.1.9)

3.1.6

target language content

content (3.1.2) that has been translated (3.1.7) or interpreted (3.1.9) from a source language (3.1.3)

3.1.7

translate

render source language content (3.1.5) into target language content (3.1.6) in written form or signed language (3.2.3)

3.1.8

translation

rendering *source language content* (3.1.5) into *target language content* (3.1.6) in written form or *signed language* (3.2.3)

3.1.9

interpret

render spoken or signed information from a *source language* (3.1.3) to a *target language* (3.1.4) in oral or signed form, conveying both the *language register* (3.2.1) and meaning of the *source language content* (3.1.5)

3.1.10

interpreting

interpretation

rendering spoken or signed information from a *source language* (3.1.3) to a *target language* (3.1.4) in oral or signed form, conveying both the *language register* (3.2.1) and meaning of the *source language content* (3.1.5)

3.1.11

translator

person who *translates* (3.1.7)

3.1.12

interpreter

person who *interprets* (3.1.9)

3.2 Concepts common to translation and interpreting

3.2.1

language register

language (3.1.1) variety used for a particular purpose or in an event of language use, depending on the type of situation, especially its degree of formality

Note 1 to entry: Individuals usually have more than one language register in their linguistic repertoire and can vary their use of language register according to their perception of what is appropriate for different purposes or domains (3.2.4).

[SOURCE: ISO/TR 20694:2018, 3.3, modified — the wording ‘An individual usually has’ has been changed to ‘Individuals usually have’, and ‘verbal repertoire’ has been changed to ‘linguistic repertoire’.]

3.2.2

language proficiency

ability of a person to understand or communicate in a given *language* (3.1.1)

Note 1 to entry: Language proficiency generally refers to speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

3.2.3

signed language

language (3.1.1) which uses a combination of hand shapes, orientation and movement of the hands, arms or body, and facial expressions

3.2.4

domain

sphere of knowledge or activity

Note 1 to entry: A domain can have its own culture, social context and linguistic characteristics.

3.2.5**client**

customer

person, or organization, who enters into a formal agreement for the provision of a service

Note 1 to entry: The formal agreement can, for example, take the form of a contract or an interdepartmental service agreement between units of an organization.

Note 2 to entry: The client can be the *end user* (3.2.6), but this does not have to be the case.

3.2.6**end user**

person or group of persons that ultimately uses the service delivered

3.2.7**authorization**

third-party attestation of a person's right to provide a specialized service

Note 1 to entry: Authorization for *legal interpreters* (3.4.20) and *legal translators* (3.3.22) is conferred by a recognized authoritative body.

Note 2 to entry: In some countries, official authorization is referred to as accreditation, certification, credentialing.

3.3 Concepts relating to translation**3.3.1****text***content* (3.1.2) in written form**3.3.2****document**

information and the medium on which it is contained

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015, 3.8.5, modified — the Example and the Notes to entry have been removed.]

3.3.3**translation output**result of *translation* (3.1.8)**3.3.4****translation service**production and delivery of *target language content* (3.1.6) according to *client* (3.2.5) specification**3.3.5****translation service provider**

TSP

person or organization that performs *translation service* (3.3.4)**3.3.6****translation workflow**sequence of activities required to produce *target language content* (3.1.6)**3.3.7****review**

monolingual editing

examination of the entire *target language content* (3.1.6) to ensure its *domain* (3.2.4) accuracy**3.3.8****reviewer**person who performs *review* (3.3.7)

3.3.9

revision

bilingual editing

examination of the entire *target language content* (3.1.6) against the *source language content* (3.1.5) to ensure linguistic accuracy and faithfulness to the source language content

3.3.10

reviser

person who performs *revision* (3.3.9)

3.3.11

check

translator's (3.1.11) examination of *target language content* (3.1.6) upon completion of *translation* (3.1.8)

3.3.12

proofread

examine the final *target language content* (3.1.6) and apply *corrections* (3.3.15) before publication

3.3.13

proofreader

person who *proofreads* (3.3.12)

3.3.14

verification

action taken to determine whether specifications have been fulfilled

3.3.15

correction

action to eliminate an error

Note 1 to entry: In translation, corrections are made when errors are detected during a *check* (3.3.11), or when errors are reported by a *reviser* (3.3.10), *reviewer* (3.3.8), *proofreader* (3.3.13) or *client* (3.2.5).

3.3.16

corrective action

action to eliminate the cause of a failure to comply with a requirement in the *translation* (3.1.8) *process* (3.3.20), with a view to preventing recurrence

3.3.17

project management

planning, organizing, monitoring, controlling and reporting of all aspects of a *project* (3.3.19) to achieve the project objectives

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015, 3.3.12, modified — the wording 'and the motivation of all those involved in it' has been deleted.]

3.3.18

project manager

PM

person responsible for *project management* (3.3.17)

3.3.19

project

unique *process* (3.3.20), consisting of a set of coordinated and controlled activities with start and finish dates, undertaken to achieve an objective conforming to specific requirements, including the constraints of time, cost and resources

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015, 3.4.2, modified — the Notes to entry have been deleted.]

3.3.20**process**

set of interrelated and interacting activities performed in order to achieve an objective

3.3.21**product**

result of a *process* ([3.3.20](#))

3.3.22**legal translator**

translator ([3.1.11](#)) who is qualified to provide *translation services* ([3.3.4](#)) related to the law

Note 1 to entry: Legal translators can be required to be authorized by law.

3.3.23**specialist field**

area of expertise of a person

3.3.24**competence**

ability to apply knowledge, experience and skills to achieve intended results

3.3.25**locale**

geographic region in which people use specific linguistic, cultural and technical conventions

3.3.26**locale convention**

accepted usage or standard practice in a *locale* ([3.3.25](#)), which is generally expected to apply

Note 1 to entry: This can include date or time formatting rules.

3.3.27**localization**

adapting *products* ([3.3.21](#)) and *services* for distinct *locales* ([3.3.25](#))

3.3.28**style guide**

set of editing and formatting instructions

3.4 Concepts relating to interpreting**3.4.1****'A' language**

primary *language* ([3.1.1](#)) or its strict equivalent of which the *interpreter* ([3.1.12](#)) has complete command and into which the interpreter *interprets* ([3.1.9](#)) from all their other 'A' languages, 'B' languages ([3.4.2](#)) or 'C' languages ([3.4.3](#))

3.4.2**'B' language**

language ([3.1.1](#)) in which the *interpreter* ([3.1.12](#)) is proficient, but which is not their primary language or its strict equivalent

Note 1 to entry: An interpreter works into this language from one or more other languages.

3.4.3**'C' language**

language ([3.1.1](#)) from which the *interpreter* ([3.1.12](#)) *interprets* ([3.1.9](#)) into their 'A' languages ([3.4.1](#)) or 'B' languages ([3.4.2](#))

Note 1 to entry: An interpreter can have more than one 'A', 'B' or 'C' language.

3.4.4

spoken language

language (3.1.1) expressed orally

3.4.5

spoken language interpreting

interpreting (3.1.10) between two *spoken languages* (3.4.4)

3.4.6

signed language interpreting

interpreting (3.1.10) between two *signed languages* (3.2.3) or between a signed language and a *spoken language* (3.4.4)

3.4.7

communicative setting

environment where an interaction between interlocutors takes place

3.4.8

communicative event

encounter between two or more parties during which information is transmitted

3.4.9

speaker

person addressing others using *spoken language* (3.4.4)

3.4.10

signer

person addressing others using *signed language* (3.2.3)

3.4.11

mode

established method for the delivery of *spoken language interpreting* (3.4.5) and *signed language interpreting* (3.4.6)

3.4.12

simultaneous interpreting

mode (3.4.11) of *interpreting* (3.1.10) performed while a *speaker* (3.4.9) or *signer* (3.4.10) is still speaking or signing

3.4.13

consecutive interpreting

mode (3.4.11) of *interpreting* (3.1.10) performed after the *speaker* (3.4.9) or *signer* (3.4.10) pauses

Note 1 to entry: *Interpreters* (3.1.12) can use *note-taking* (3.4.29) to help in rendering lengthy passages.

3.4.14

relay interpreting

interpreting (3.1.10) that occurs when an *interpreter's* (3.1.12) input comes from another interpreter's rendition and not directly from the *speaker* (3.4.9) or *signer* (3.4.10)

3.4.15

distance interpreting

remote interpreting

interpreting (3.1.10) of a *speaker* (3.4.9) or *signer* (3.4.10) in a different location from that of the *interpreter* (3.1.12), enabled by information and communications technology

3.4.16

sight translation

rendering written *source language content* (3.1.5) to the *target language* (3.1.4) in the form of *spoken language* (3.4.4) or *signed language* (3.2.3)

3.4.17**chuchotage**

whispered interpreting

simultaneous interpreting (3.4.12) where the *interpreter* (3.1.12) speaks very quietly, sits or stands in close proximity to the listeners and uses no interpreting equipment

Note 1 to entry: Chuchotage is used for interpreting to a very small number of listeners, ideally one or two.

3.4.18**conference interpreting**

interpreting (3.1.10) used for multilingual communication at technical, political, scientific and other formal meetings

3.4.19**legal interpreting**

interpreting (3.1.10) at *communicative settings* (3.4.7) related to the law

3.4.20**legal interpreter**

interpreter (3.1.12) who is qualified to provide *legal interpreting* (3.4.19) services

Note 1 to entry: Legal interpreters can be required to be authorized by law.

3.4.21**community interpreting**

public service interpreting

interpreting (3.1.10) that enables people to access services available to society as a whole, and which they would otherwise be unable to access owing to a *language* (3.1.1) barrier

EXAMPLE Social services, tourist services, disaster victim support services.

3.4.22**community interpreter**

public service interpreter

interpreter (3.1.12) who specializes in *community interpreting* (3.4.21)

3.4.23**healthcare interpreting**

medical interpreting

interpreting (3.1.10) health-related communication between patients, accompanying persons and treatment providers, or administrators, who do not use the same *language* (3.1.1)

3.4.24**healthcare interpreter**

medical interpreter

interpreter (3.1.12) who is qualified to provide *healthcare interpreting* (3.4.23) services

Note 1 to entry: Healthcare interpreters can be required to be authorized.

3.4.25**participant**

person who takes an active part in an event

3.4.26**chairperson**

participant (3.4.25) who is in charge of conducting the proceedings at an event

3.4.27**audience**

group of listeners or spectators at an event

3.4.28

interpreting service provider

ISP

interpreter (3.1.12) or organization making *interpreting* (3.1.10) available to a *client* (3.2.5)

3.4.29

note-taking

technique in *consecutive interpreting* (3.4.13) used by *interpreters* (3.1.12) for remembering, conceptualizing and summarizing information

Note 1 to entry: Note-taking is highly individual and can involve a mixture of symbols, abbreviations, words and diagrams.

3.4.30

protocol

rule, official procedure or common practice that guides the conduct of members of a profession

3.5 Concepts relating to technology

3.5.1 Concepts relating to translation technology

3.5.1.1

human translation

translation (3.1.8) performed by a *translator* (3.1.11)

3.5.1.2

natural language

NL

written, signed, or spoken human *language* (3.1.1)

Note 1 to entry: For example, languages which are not natural include programming languages such as C++.

3.5.1.3

controlled natural language

controlled language

CNL

natural language (3.5.1.2) whose grammar and vocabulary have been artificially restricted in order to reduce or eliminate ambiguity and complexity

3.5.1.4

computer-aided translation tool

CAT tool

software application used to support *human translation* (3.5.1.1)

3.5.1.5

computer-aided translation

CAT

translation (3.1.8) carried out using *computer-aided translation tools* (3.5.1.4)

3.5.1.6

translation memory

TM

digital repository used to store and retrieve previously *translated* (3.1.7) content matched with *source language content* (3.1.5)

3.5.1.7

segment

unit of text resulting from the splitting of text according to predefined rules

3.5.1.8**machine translation**

MT

automated *translation* (3.1.8) of *text* (3.3.1) from one *natural language* (3.5.1.2) to another using software

3.5.1.9**machine translation system**

MT system

technology used to perform *machine translation* (3.5.1.8)

3.5.1.10**machine translation output**

MT output

result of *machine translation* (3.5.1.8)

3.5.1.11**post-edit**

edit and correct *machine translation output* (3.5.1.10)

3.5.1.12**post-editor**

person who *post-edits* (3.5.1.11)

3.5.1.13**post-editing**

editing and correcting *machine translation output* (3.5.1.10)

3.5.1.14**full post-editing**

post-editing (3.5.1.13) to obtain *translation output* (3.3.3) comparable to that obtained by *human translation* (3.5.1.1)

3.5.2 Concepts relating to interpreting technology**3.5.2.1****booth**

simultaneous interpreting booth

self-contained unit enclosing the *interpreter's* (3.1.12) workspace

Note 1 to entry: One of the purposes of booths is to provide *sound* (3.5.2.11) insulation, both from the noise transmitted from the booth's external environment into the booth itself and vice versa, and from noise passing from one booth to another.

3.5.2.2**permanent booth**

permanent simultaneous interpreting booth

booth (3.5.2.1) structurally integrated into a facility

3.5.2.3**mobile booth**

mobile simultaneous interpreting booth

free-standing *booth* (3.5.2.1) assembled from modular components which can be transported and set up at a variety of facilities

3.5.2.4**control booth**

room from which technical equipment and audio and video *signal* (3.5.2.5) quality are managed

3.5.2.5

signal

detectable transmitted energy that is used to carry information

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 14776-153:2015, 3.1.87]

3.5.2.6

system

combination of interacting elements organized to achieve a given objective

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 30111:2013, 3.6, modified — the wording “one or more stated purposes” was changed to “a given objective”.]

3.5.2.7

conference system

system ([3.5.2.6](#)) that controls technical equipment used to conduct an event

3.5.2.8

discussion system

system ([3.5.2.6](#)) that controls *discussion units* ([3.5.2.9](#))

3.5.2.9

discussion unit

electronic device serving a *participant* ([3.4.25](#)) to speak at an event

3.5.2.10

sound reinforcement system

speech reinforcement system

public address system

system ([3.5.2.6](#)) that amplifies *sound* ([3.5.2.11](#))

3.5.2.11

sound

form of energy that moves through media in waves of pressure

[SOURCE: ISO/TS 16976-7:2013, 3.1.5]

3.5.2.12

interpreting system

combination of *interpreting* ([3.1.10](#)) equipment and system ([3.5.2.6](#)) for *language distribution* ([3.5.2.13](#))

Note 1 to entry: An interpreting system can require the use of *booths* ([3.5.2.1](#)) compliant with ISO 2603 or ISO 4043, equipped with *interpreter consoles* ([3.5.2.21](#)) compliant with ISO 20109, or a *portable interpreting system* ([3.5.2.14](#)), compliant with ISO 20109.

3.5.2.13

language distribution

transmission of the *floor* ([3.5.2.34](#)) and *interpreted* ([3.1.9](#)) speech to the *participants* ([3.4.25](#)) and *audience* ([3.4.27](#))

3.5.2.14

portable interpreting system

simultaneous interpreting ([3.4.12](#)) equipment, with battery-operated components, which is lightweight and enables the *interpreter* ([3.1.12](#)) and the *participants* ([3.4.25](#)) to move around

3.5.2.15

technician

person responsible for the availability and maintenance of technical equipment

3.5.2.16

operator

person responsible for the operation of technical equipment

3.5.2.17**transducer**

device that converts one type of energy to another

[SOURCE: ISO/TS 19130-2:2014]

3.5.2.18**microphone**

transducer (3.5.2.17) that converts *sound* (3.5.2.11) into an electrical *signal* (3.5.2.5)

3.5.2.19**loudspeaker**

transducer (3.5.2.17) that converts an electrical *signal* (3.5.2.5) into *sound* (3.5.2.11) that is loud enough to be heard at a distance

3.5.2.20**amplifier**

electronic device that converts a small *signal* (3.5.2.5) to a larger signal

[SOURCE: ISO 5577:2017, 5.1.5, modified — the word "which" is replaced by "that".]

3.5.2.21**interpreter console**

individual workstation containing controls for listening and speaking that enable *simultaneous interpreting* (3.4.12)

3.5.2.22**video display**

electronic device that represents information in a visual form

3.5.2.23**central controller**

equipment that directs the operation of the *conference system* (3.5.2.7) and the *systems* (3.5.2.6) and devices connected to it

3.5.2.24**audio mixing device**

equipment for combining, routing, and changing the gain, volume, timbre and dynamics of analogue or digital *signals* (3.5.2.5), summing them to produce one or more combined output signals

3.5.2.25**headphone**

transducer (3.5.2.17) that converts an electrical *signal* (3.5.2.5) into *sound* (3.5.2.11), designed to be worn close to the ear

3.5.2.26**earclip headphone**

earshell headphone

one-ear *headphone* (3.5.2.25) designed to be worn attached to the ear

3.5.2.27**in-ear headphone**

headphone (3.5.2.25) designed to be worn inside the ear

3.5.2.28**headset**

headphones (3.5.2.25) combined with a *microphone* (3.5.2.18)