



THE NOTION OF REPRESENTATIVE LANGUAGES IN THE CONTEXT OF TRANSLATABILITY ASSESSMENT

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OBJECTIVES

1. Define Translatability Assessment and its purpose.
2. Characterize representative languages and how they fit into the translatability process.
3. Describe linguistic and non-linguistic criteria for representative language selection.
4. Identify potential benefits of conducting Translatability Assessment using a representative languages approach.

TRANSLATABILITY ASSESSMENT

Definition: Assessing the extent to which the content of a PRO measure can be **meaningfully translated** by identifying problematic **translation issues**, and suggesting revisions to improve the problematic content.

TRANSLATABILITY ASSESSMENT

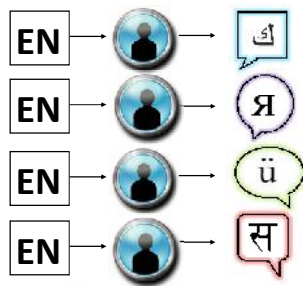
Purpose: To refine the questionnaire during its developmental stages in order to...

- minimize subsequent translation issues
- improve cross-cultural equivalence
- increase the likelihood that the resulting data from the new measure can be meaningfully pooled in global studies

APPROACHES FOR CONDUCTING TRANSLATABILITY ASSESSMENT

Approach A:

Actual Translation of item text with retrospective assessment of difficulty

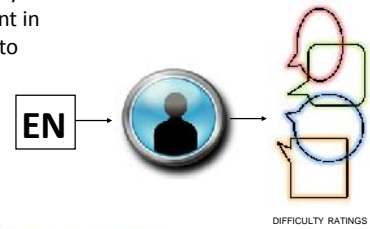


TRANSLATIONS

APPROACHES FOR CONDUCTING TRANSLATABILITY ASSESSMENT (Cont.)

Approach B:

Review of item text by one consultant, fluent in multiple languages, to prospectively assess difficulty.

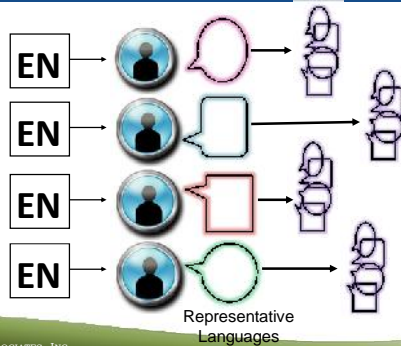


DIFFICULTY RATINGS

APPROACHES FOR CONDUCTING TRANSLATABILITY ASSESSMENT (Cont.)

Approach C:

Review of item text by multiple (bilingual) consultants to prospectively assess difficulty.

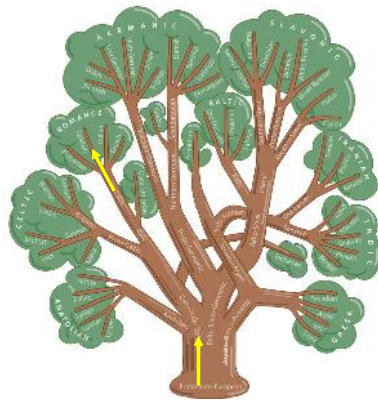


DEFINING “REPRESENTATIVE” LANGUAGES

Definition: Languages that share common features with other similar languages in such a way that a translation issue found in the one language is likely to also be found in the others from the same language group (or “family subgroup”).

These common features can be linguistic in nature, or they can be non-linguistic.

Language Evolution results in subgroups that share linguistic features inherited from a common ancestor.



LINGUISTIC FEATURES THAT MAY BE SHARED BY FAMILIES OR FAMILY SUBGROUPS

Examples may include:

- **Word order rules**
Subject-Verb-Object vs. Verb-Subject-Object
- **Phrase structure rules**
Adj-N vs. N-Adj
- **Morphology**
Walk + ing, Walk + er, Walk + ed

LINGUISTIC FEATURES THAT MAY BE SHARED BY FAMILIES OR FAMILY SUBGROUPS (Cont.)

Examples may include:

- **Case systems**
Marking nouns with their grammatical role (subject, direct object, indirect object, etc.) using a word particle
- **Classifier systems**
Marking nouns belonging to a certain class (e.g. “flat, round objects”) using a word particle
- **Availability of lexical items**
E.g. separate words for “irritated”, “angry”, and “frustrated”

EXAMPLES OF NON-LINGUISTIC FEATURES TO CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING REPRESENTATIVE LANGUAGES

- Sponsor interest based on potential study site locations
- Number of speakers world-wide
- Geographic distribution of speakers
- Culture (religion/diet/social norms)
- Health care utilization practices
- Study implementation factors (e.g. use of e-platforms)

NON-LINGUISTIC FEATURES TO CONSIDER (Cont.)

- Sponsor interest based on potential study site locations
 - Actual countries where study sites are targeted (if known)
 - Estimate of countries based on prior history of trial sites (most frequently used locations previously)
 - Regions targeted for marketing (if known)

NON-LINGUISTIC FEATURES TO CONSIDER (Cont.)

- Number of speakers world-wide

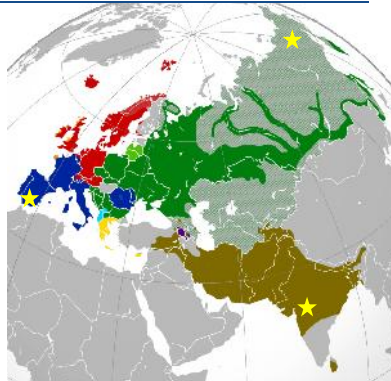
Worldwide speakership goes beyond the bounds of single countries

- Arabic – 206 million
 - Semitic Subgroup – 270 million
- Chinese – 840 million
 - Chinese Subgroup – 1.2 Billion
- Russian – 155 million
 - Slavic Subgroup – 250 million
- Spanish – 406 million
 - Romance Subgroup – 800 million

NON-LINGUISTIC FEATURES TO CONSIDER (Cont.)

- Geographic distribution of speakers

Example: Indo-European subgroups span all of Eurasia



INTERPRETING TA RESULTS WHEN USING A REPRESENTATIVE LANGUAGE APPROACH

RESULTS CAN BE:

- Applied to both the specific language used
- Extended to other members of the language family

THEREFORE, INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

from use of a representative language approach provides information about:

- Actual difficulties in the representative language
- And potential difficulties in the extended language group

CONCLUSIONS

- Translatability Assessment is beneficial in the developmental stages of the measure, when it is not often clear what specific translations will be needed.
- Differences will always exist between individual languages. However, many language groups/subgroups have common features that will either support ease of translation, or present a common difficulty in achieving concept equivalence.
- Therefore, representative languages can be useful in identifying where translation issues are likely to be encountered, and this approach can help estimate the translation difficulty for a broader group (or family) of languages.

References

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Thank you

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