



**International  
Standard**

**ISO 5060**

**Translation services — Evaluation  
of translation output — General  
guidance**

*Services de traduction — Évaluation des résultats de traduction  
— Recommandations générales*

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# Contents

|   | Page      |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Foreword</b> .....   | <b>iv</b> |
| <b>Introduction</b> .....   | <b>v</b>  |
| <b>1 Scope</b> .....  | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>2 Normative references</b> .....   | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>3 Terms and definitions</b> .....  | <b>1</b>  |
| 3.1 General concepts.....   | 1         |
| 3.2 Concepts related to the people involved in the evaluation process.....                  | 3         |
| 3.3 Concepts related to the evaluation process.....   | 3         |
| 3.4 Concepts related to errors.....   | 4         |
| 3.5 Concepts related to penalty points.....   | 5         |
| <b>4 Human resources</b> .....  | <b>6</b>  |
| 4.1 General.....  | 6         |
| 4.2 Professional competences of evaluators.....   | 6         |
| 4.3 Qualifications of evaluators.....   | 6         |
| <b>5 Pre-evaluation phase</b> .....   | <b>7</b>  |
| 5.1 Evaluation approaches.....  | 7         |
| 5.2 Implementing the evaluation of translation output.....                                  | 7         |
| 5.3 Specifications.....   | 7         |
| 5.4 Error typology.....   | 7         |
| 5.5 Error type weights.....   | 9         |
| 5.6 Severity levels.....  | 9         |
| 5.7 Critical errors.....  | 9         |
| 5.8 Counting repeated errors.....   | 9         |
| <b>6 Evaluation phase</b> .....   | <b>9</b>  |
| 6.1 General.....  | 9         |
| 6.2 Basic evaluation principles.....  | 10        |
| 6.3 Sampling the translation output to be evaluated.....                                    | 10        |
| 6.4 Translation evaluation scorecard.....   | 10        |
| 6.5 Quality rating.....   | 11        |
| <b>7 Post-evaluation phase</b> .....  | <b>11</b> |
| 7.1 Feedback.....   | 11        |
| 7.2 Dispute resolution.....   | 11        |
| <b>Annex A (informative) Translation use case, evaluation purpose and constraints</b> ..... | <b>12</b> |
| <b>Annex B (informative) Developing a translation evaluation strategy</b> .....             | <b>13</b> |
| <b>Annex C (informative) Developing a translation evaluation system</b> .....               | <b>14</b> |
| <b>Annex D (informative) Sampling</b> .....   | <b>15</b> |
| <b>Annex E (informative) Cohesion and coherence</b> .....                                   | <b>16</b> |
| <b>Annex F (informative) Examples of scorecards for evaluating translation output</b> ..... | <b>17</b> |
| <b>Bibliography</b> .....   | <b>21</b> |

## 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 document 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](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

ISO draws attention to the possibility that the implementation of this document may involve the use of (a) patent(s). ISO takes no position concerning the evidence, validity or applicability of any claimed patent rights in respect thereof. As of the date of publication of this document, ISO had not received notice of (a) patent(s) which may be required to implement this document. However, implementers are cautioned that this may not represent the latest information, which may be obtained from the patent database available at [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents). ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

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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](http://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](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

## Introduction

Globalization, the accompanying growth of the translation market, the professionalization of translation services and the growing availability of online machine translation tools have driven the demand for standardized and harmonized principles and procedures for the evaluation of translation output.

In an industrial world in which products have to comply with legal regulations and client specifications, translation output has to be regarded as a product that has to fulfil certain requirements. The systematic comparison of a target language content with the source language content giving regard to the translation project specifications provides the means to arrive at a valuable and objective judgement of achievement.

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# Translation services — Evaluation of translation output — General guidance

## 1 Scope

This document gives guidance on the evaluation of human translation output, post-edited machine translation output, and unedited machine translation output. It also provides guidance on the qualifications and competences of evaluators. The role of sampling is also discussed in this document.

This document focuses on an analytic translation evaluation approach using error types and penalty points configured to produce an error score and a quality rating.

A further focus is the human evaluation of translation output only. This document follows an approach designed to reflect minimum complexity. The rationale behind this approach is to keep this document applicable for as many users as possible in the translation sector.

The guidance provided in this document can also support the evaluation of source texts intended for translation.

This document is applicable to translation service providers (TSPs), including individual translators, translation companies or in-house translation services, their clients and other interested parties in the translation sector, such as translator education and training institutions.

This document does not apply to related elements such as the processes of assuring the quality of translation output and corrective actions.

This document does not apply to interpreting.

## 2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 20539, *Translation, interpreting and related technology — Vocabulary*

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 20539 and the following apply.

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

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

### 3.1 General concepts

#### 3.1.1

##### **translate**

render *source language content* (3.1.6) into *target language content* (3.1.7) in written form or signed language

[SOURCE: ISO 20539:2023, 3.1.8]