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## Translation, interpreting and related technology — Vocabulary

*Traduction, interprétation et technologies apparentées — Vocabulaire*

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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~~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)).

~~Attention is drawn~~ISO draws attention to the possibility that ~~some of the~~ elementsimplementation of this document may ~~be~~involve the subjectuse 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. ~~Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).~~

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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/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*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 20539:2019), which has been technically revised.

The main changes are as follows:

- ~~—~~new terminological entries arising from the publication of new and revised International Standards in the fields of translation, interpreting and related technology have been added;
- ~~—~~some terminological entries have been updated.

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

~~The main purpose of this~~This document is intended to provide a description of concepts used in International Standards on interpreting, translation and related technologies. 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~~. However, it is likely that in the long term, consistency in terms and definitions across the related International Standards will have a standardizing effect in practice.

Information within terminological entries in this document has been structured in accordance with ISO\_10241-1:2011, and concepts have been grouped, as far as was possible, according to thematic order, as defined in ISO 1087:-2019, 3.7.11. Related concepts are grouped together under subheadings. The subheadings are:

- ~~—~~key concepts;
- ~~—~~concepts common to translation and interpreting;
- ~~—~~concepts relating to translation;
- ~~—~~concepts relating to interpreting;
- ~~—~~concepts relating to technology.

The last subheading is divided into two parts: technology relating to translation and that relating to interpreting.

An effort has been made to avoid using terms without having defined the relevant concept first. This is to ensure that the reader does not come across a term for the first time within the definition of another concept, with no clear understanding of it. For example, “floor” is defined before the term is used in the definition of “language distribution”.

For the convenience of readers, an index is provided at the end of this document, in which all terms are listed alphabetically, with their relevant terminological entry numbers.

# Translation, interpreting and related technology — Vocabulary

## 1 Scope

This document ~~establishes~~defines terms for International Standards on translation, interpreting and related technology.

## 2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

## 3 Terms and definitions

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>~~<https://www.iso.org/obp>
- ~~IEC Electropedia~~: available at ~~<https://www.electropedia.org/>~~<https://www.electropedia.org/>

### 3.1 Key concepts

#### 3.1.1

##### language

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

#### 3.1.2

##### content

information in any form

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<https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/88101d1c-f9f5-42d5-94c2-9e0251adc756/iso-fdis-20539>

EXAMPLE *Text* ~~(3.3.1)~~(3.3.1), audio, video.

#### 3.1.3

##### source language

*language* ~~(3.1.1)~~(3.1.1) from which *content* ~~(3.1.2)~~(3.1.2) is *translated* ~~(3.1.8)~~(3.1.8) or *interpreted* ~~(3.1.10)~~(3.1.10)

#### 3.1.4

##### target language

*language* ~~(3.1.1)~~(3.1.1) into which *content* ~~(3.1.2)~~(3.1.2) is *translated* ~~(3.1.8)~~(3.1.8) or *interpreted* ~~(3.1.10)~~(3.1.10)

#### 3.1.5

##### source language content

*content* ~~(3.1.2)~~(3.1.2) to be *translated* ~~(3.1.8)~~(3.1.8) or *interpreted* ~~(3.1.10)~~(3.1.10)

#### 3.1.6

##### target language content

*content* ~~(3.1.2)~~(3.1.2) *translated* ~~(3.1.8)~~(3.1.8) or *interpreted* ~~(3.1.10)~~(3.1.10) from a *source language* ~~(3.1.3)~~(3.1.3)

### 3.1.7

#### signed language

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

### 3.1.8

#### translate

render *source language content* (3.1.5)(3.1.5) into *target language content* (3.1.6)(3.1.6) in written form or *signed language* (3.1.7)(3.1.7)

### 3.1.9

#### translation

rendering *source language content* (3.1.5)(3.1.5) into *target language content* (3.1.6)(3.1.6) in written form or *signed language* (3.1.7)(3.1.7)

### 3.1.10

#### interpret

render spoken or signed information from a *source language* (3.1.3)(3.1.3) into a *target language* (3.1.4)(3.1.4) in spoken or signed form, conveying both the meaning and *language register* (3.2.2)(3.2.2) of the *source language content* (3.1.5)(3.1.5)

### 3.1.11

#### interpreting interpretation

rendering spoken or signed information from a *source language* (3.1.3)(3.1.3) into a *target language* (3.1.4)(3.1.4) in spoken or signed form, conveying both the meaning and *language register* (3.2.2)(3.2.2) of the *source language content* (3.1.5)(3.1.5)

### 3.1.12

#### translator

person who *translates* (3.1.8)(3.1.8) <https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/88101d1c-f9f5-42d5-94c2-9e0251adc756/iso-fdis-20539>

### 3.1.13

#### interpreter

person who *interprets* (3.1.10)(3.1.10)

## 3.2 Concepts common to translation and interpreting

### 3.2.1

#### domain

sphere of knowledge or activity

Note\_1\_to\_entry:-A domain can have its own culture, social context and linguistic characteristics.

### 3.2.2

#### language register

language (3.1.1)(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:-A person usually has 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* (3.2.1)(3.2.1).



[SOURCE: ISO/TR 20694:2018, 3.3, modified — The wording “An individual usually has” has been changed to “A person usually has”, “verbal repertoire” has been changed to “linguistic repertoire” and the word “language” has been added before “register” in Note 1 to entry.]

### 3.2.3

#### language proficiency

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

Note\_1\_to\_entry:-Language proficiency generally refers to speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

### 3.2.4

#### competence

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

### 3.2.5

#### qualification

demonstrated education, training and work experience, where applicable

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17024:2012, 3.7]

### 3.2.6

#### continuing professional development

##### CPD

#### continuing education

maintaining, improving or increasing knowledge and skills related to a professional activity

### 3.2.7

#### authorization

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

### 3.2.8

#### end user

person or group of persons that ultimately uses a service

### 3.2.9

#### 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* (3.2.8),(3.2.8), but this does not have to be the case.

## 3.3 Concepts relating to translation

### 3.3.1

#### text

*content* (3.1.2)(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 ~~notes~~Example and Notes to entry have been ~~omitted~~removed.]

### 3.3.3

#### **translation output**

result of *translation* ~~(3.1.9)~~(3.1.9)

### 3.3.4

#### **translation service**

production and delivery of *target language content* ~~(3.1.6)~~(3.1.6) according to specifications issued by a *client* ~~(3.2.9)~~(3.2.9)

### 3.3.5

#### **translation service provider**

##### **TSP**

person or organization that performs a translation service ~~(3.3.4)~~(3.3.4)

### 3.3.6

#### **translation workflow**

sequence of activities required to produce *target language content* ~~(3.1.6)~~(3.1.6)

### 3.3.7

#### **review**

##### **monolingual editing**

examination of the entire *target language content* ~~(3.1.6)~~(3.1.6) to ensure its *domain* ~~(3.2.1)~~(3.2.1) accuracy

### 3.3.8

#### **reviewer**

person who performs *review* ~~(3.3.7)~~(3.3.7) ISO/FDIS 20539  
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9e0251adc756/iso-fdis-20539

### 3.3.9

#### **revision**

##### **bilingual editing**

examination of the entire *target language content* ~~(3.1.6)~~(3.1.6) against the *source language content* ~~(3.1.5)~~(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)~~(3.3.9)

### 3.3.11

#### **check**

*translator's* ~~(3.1.12)~~(3.1.12) examination of *target language content* ~~(3.1.6)~~(3.1.6) upon completion of *translation* ~~(3.1.9)~~(3.1.9)

### 3.3.12

#### **proofread**

examine the final *target language content* ~~(3.1.6)~~(3.1.6) and apply *corrections* ~~(3.3.18)~~(3.3.18) before submission to the *client* ~~(3.2.9)~~(3.2.9)

**3.3.13****proofreader**

person who *proofreads* (3.3.12),(3.3.12)

**3.3.14****process**

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

**3.3.15****project**

unique *process* (3.3.14),(3.3.14), 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~~Notes to entry have ~~been omitted~~been removed.]

**3.3.16****project management**

planning, organizing, monitoring, controlling and reporting of all aspects of a *project* (3.3.15),(3.3.15) 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 omitted~~been removed.]

**3.3.17****project manager****PM**

person responsible for *project management* (3.3.16),(3.3.16)

**3.3.18****correction**

action to eliminate an error

Note-1-to-entry:- In *translation* (3.1.9),(3.1.9), corrections are made when errors are detected during a *check* (3.3.11),(3.3.11), or when errors are reported by a *reviser* (3.3.10),(3.3.10), *reviewer* (3.3.8),(3.3.8), *proofreader* (3.3.13),(3.3.13) or *client* (3.2.9),(3.2.9).

**3.3.19****corrective action**

action to eliminate the cause of a failure to comply with a requirement in the *process* (3.3.14),(3.3.14) of *translation* (3.1.9),(3.1.9), with a view to preventing recurrence

**3.3.20****verification**

action taken to determine whether specifications have been fulfilled

**3.3.21****style guide**

set of editing and formatting instructions

**3.3.22****specialist field**

area of expertise of a person

### 3.3.23

#### **legal translation**

*translation* (3.1.9)(3.1.9) of legal texts (3.3.1)(3.3.1)

### 3.3.24

#### **legal translator**

*translator* (3.1.12)(3.1.12) who is qualified to provide *legal translation* (3.3.23)(3.3.23)

Note\_1\_to\_entry:- Legal translators can be required to be authorized by law.

### 3.3.25

#### **authorized legal translator**

*legal translator* (3.3.24)(3.3.24) who has been granted *authorization* (3.2.7)(3.2.7) by a court or government body

### 3.3.26

#### **locale**

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

### 3.3.27

#### **localization**

~~adapting~~*adaptation of* products and services for distinct *locales* (3.3.26)(3.3.26)

### 3.3.28

#### **locale convention**

accepted usage or standard practice in a *locale* (3.3.26)(3.3.26), which is generally expected to apply

Note\_1\_to\_entry:- This may include date or time formatting rules.

## 3.4 Concepts relating to interpreting

### 3.4.1

#### **spoken language**

*language* (3.1.1)(3.1.1) expressed orally

### 3.4.2

#### **spoken language interpreting**

*interpreting* (3.1.11)(3.1.11) between two *spoken languages* (3.4.1)(3.4.1)

### 3.4.3

#### **signed language interpreting**

*interpreting* (3.1.11)(3.1.11) between two *signed languages* (3.1.7)(3.1.7) or between a signed language and a *spoken language* (3.4.1)(3.4.1)

### 3.4.4

#### **signed language interpreter**

*interpreter* (3.1.13)(3.1.13) who performs *signed language interpreting* (3.4.3)(3.4.3)

### 3.4.5

#### **speaker**

person addressing others using *spoken language* (3.4.1)(3.4.1)