Translator Test Expectations

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gengo™

1. Getting Started

OUR TEST PHILOSOPHY

We carry out translator testing because it gives our customers a dependable service. By passing a test, all translators who work for us have proved they can translate to a similar level.

However, this means that our motivation for testing is not the same as the motivation of schools and universities.

In an academic context, an examiner will look through an applicant's submission in its entirety and give that person an overall grade based on their performance. Whether the applicant receives an "A" or a "D" grade, the examiner will spend an equivalent amount of time reviewing the submission, because they have a duty to correctly judge the performance of the applicant regardless of the level they attain.

Our test review process is not like that at all.

Our duty is not to educate or to find the hidden talents of test applicants. Instead, we want to find skilled applicants and reject unskilled or careless applicants.

As such, the moment the test reviewer discovers that an applicant has failed to meet the standards we expect, the test will be rejected.

KNOW THE STYLE GUIDE

It's important that you're intimately familiar with the Style Guide.

All test review decisions and any errors you make will be judged according to the Style Guide.

Read the Style Guide now if you haven't already!

MAJOR VS. MINOR ERRORS

Gengo uses the concept of "major" and "minor" errors to decide whether to approve or reject a test.

A "major" error impedes the comprehension of text or the natural flow of reading.

A "minor" error does not impede the understanding of a text, but would be noticed by the reader as incorrect or inconsistent with our Style Guide.

Depending on the testing level, we are able to overlook a certain number of minor errors. However we never approve a test containing a major error.

2. What to Expect

TEST RESULTS

Your test will be reviewed within 30 days of submission, and you have 3 tries to pass our tests.

ALL TEST DECISIONS ARE FINAL

We have made the testing procedure as straightforward as possible, and provide you with the necessary resources and tools to help you prepare. Please reciprocate by accepting our test decisions as final.

SYSTEM PROBLEMS

In the rare case that you encounter a system error and your test submission is negatively affected, send us a support ticket immediately to let us know.

3. Error Types

MAJOR ERRORS

A major error is a clear mistranslation, or impedes the comprehension of text or the natural flow of reading. Some examples:

1. Meaning

1.1 A word/character or phrase that is translated incorrectly.

1.2 A word/character or phrase that is not translated.

1.3 A translation that is too literal to be understandable to a native speaker, using conventions only found in the source language.

2. Grammar

2.1 A grammatical error that affects the meaning of the translation or the structure of the sentence. For instance:

Not using a hyphen to clarify meaning for compound words.

Wrong use of a and an.

Word, name, title, organization or business is not capitalized.

3. Style

3.1 The writing style is incongruous with the source, or inappropriate in the target language.

3.2 A poorly or awkwardly translated sentence that a native speaker would find unnatural sounding.

MINOR ERRORS

A minor error does not impede the understanding of a text, but would be noticed by the reader as incorrect or inconsistent with our Style Guide. Some examples:

1. Meaning

1.1 Word/character or phrase that could have been translated better, but is not necessarily wrong.

1.2 Word/character or phrase that is specific to a particular region or country (e.g., writing "football" instead of "soccer" for a US English test).

2. Grammar

2.1 Grammatical errors that do not affect the meaning or structure of the sentence. For instance:

A noun is hyphenated unnecessarily (should be with or without a space).

Currency is written long-form instead of using the currency symbol.

Date is written incorrectly (not as Month Day, Year).

3. Spelling

3.1 Regional differences in spelling (e.g., US vs. UK English).

3.2 A word is spelled incorrectly, or wrong character is used, including typos.

3.3 If the translation involves a number, the wrong number is written.

4. Punctuation

4.1 Punctuation errors that are made in conjunction with minor grammatical errors (check "Minor errors: Grammar 2.1").

4.2 Incorrect punctuation is used.

4.3 Punctuation of the source text is used, and not that of the target language.

5. Style

5.1 Abbreviations, contractions or acronyms are used.

6. Formatting

6.1 The number of paragraphs or line breaks in the original and translated text do not match. As much as formatting is important, it should not be the sole reason for a rejection. If formatting is the only error you find, we consider it a minor error and approve the test.

4. How to Pass the Tests

STANDARD LEVEL

Standard level tests must accurately convey the complete meaning of the source text and read naturally for a native speaker.

To pass, a Standard test should have 0 major errors and no more than 3 minor errors.

The moment the test reviewer spots 1 major error or over 3 minor errors, they will stop reviewing the test and reject it.

PRO LEVEL

Pro level tests must also accurately convey the meaning and style of the source text, but also demonstrate the ability to translate more complex material, such as business letters or presentations. A great attention to detail and a completely natural, professional writing style are needed.

To pass, a Pro test should have 0 major errors and no more than 1 minor error.

The moment the test reviewer spots 1 major error or more than 1 minor error, they will stop reviewing the test and reject it.

PROOFREAD LEVEL

Proofread level tests are similar to Pro tests. However, proofreaders are tested on their ability to find and correct specific errors, and demonstrate careful attention to detail.

The Proofread test consists of a text in the original language and a translation containing a limited number of specific errors. A proofreader must find these errors and correct them, while not making any new errors.

A proofreader should not make significant changes to the translation or change the text to fit a particular writing style.

To pass, a Proofread test should have 0 errors and no unnecessary changes to the translated text (i.e., retranslation or rewriting).

The moment the test reviewer spots an error, or sees that significant changes were made to the text, they will stop reviewing the test and reject it.

> ⚠️ We reject any test submission if:
> 1. The text is empty
> 2. The text is a machine translation

5. Common Reasons for Rejection

RETRANSLATED PROOFREAD TEST

As mentioned above, the objective of a proofread test is to find obvious errors and correct them, not to retranslate the text to fit one's own writing style. If the proofreader makes significant changes to the text, it will be rejected.

WRONG TEST SUBMITTED

We differentiate some languages by region/country (e.g., Spanish (Spain) vs. Spanish (Latin America)). If a test is submitted in the wrong language pair, it will be rejected.

A BAD TRANSLATION

If the test submission is far from meeting our standards, the test will be rejected and we will suggest that the test should not be retaken.

MACHINE TRANSLATION

Don't try to cheat our system. If you submit a machine translation, we always know.