



La Frontera Language Services
Helping you cross the language frontier.

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Translation and editing services: How do you know what you need?

Like any field, the language service field has its own vocabulary. You have a communication need that you're trying to resolve, but how do you know what you really want? Here are some frequently asked questions:

What's the difference between translating and interpreting?

Translation is the process of turning words from one language into another on paper, on a website, or a video.

Interpreting is the process of converting spoken words from one language into another during an interview, phone conversation, or other "live" event.

La Frontera Language Services focuses on translating documents, websites, Power Points, articles, subtitles, etc., from Spanish into English or English into Spanish.

What's the difference between editing and proofreading?

Editing is the process of making sure a document flows well and makes sense. A translator will also make sure the translated document sounds like it was written in the target language, and doesn't use the sentence structure of the original language.

Proofreading is the process of checking for misspellings and mistakes in grammar or punctuation.

La Frontera Language Services will edit and proofread every document we translate, and we also offer editing services for documents written in English.

How much does it cost?

Translation jobs are rarely priced by the hour. Translation and editing services are usually based on the number of words in the original document. We can use the word count to give you a flat price before we start work. The number of pages is not a good guide, as documents can vary a lot, for example, single space, double space, margin size, or the number of illustrations. Our translation prices range from \$.06 to \$.15 per word, depending on the subject matter and the complexity of the document (for example, inserted tables and map that need editing, multiple formats, technical vocabulary, etc.). Editing prices are generally \$.03 per word.

Pricing for market research and curriculum development depends on the needs of the project.

What is localization? (Also known as “localisation” in British English!)

Localization is the process of adapting a translated document to a specific country or region. Some examples of localization that we do at La Frontera are:

- the use of British spelling for documents translated from Spanish to English for use in Europe
- using different grammar or vocabulary depending on the Spanish target audience
- the conversion of metric units to U.S. units or vice versa
- adapting formats for currency, dates, and time
- changing the phrasing to avoid images or wording that would not be acceptable to the target audience.

How long will it take for you to translate my document?

The timeframe depends on the length and complexity of the document, as well as how many other projects we have at the same time. It is possible to have a one-day turnaround time for documents of 1500-2000 words. Clients in Europe and Asia are fortunate because they are 8 hours (Spain) to 15 hours (China) ahead of us, so they can send us a project at the end of their work day and we will be working while they are sleeping!

What is a certified translation?

Many countries have a certification or licensing process for translators, and translators who pass the exam have an official stamp. There is no such process in the United States, other than for court interpreters. A “certified translation” in the United States is one to which the translator adds a statement that the translation is true, accurate, and correct “to the best of my knowledge and ability,” and this statement is notarized and attached to the original and the translation. A translator does not need to have any particular certificate or be a member of any particular organization to provide a “certified translation.” Note that the notary seal only assures that the signature is that of the translator; the notary is not guaranteeing the accuracy of the translation.

Unless you need a “certified translation” for legal or immigration purposes there is no added value to paying for a notary’s stamp and the mailing costs for a hard copy of the document.