

Region 9 Guidelines for Translation

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I. Region 9 Experience with Translations

1. These guidelines are not intended to give you any specific instructions on conducting translations into your own language, but rather to share some of the experience learned from our struggles in this area.
2. These guidelines do not replace WSO's formal approval process. We also suggest that you look for the World Service Office's International Translations and Publishing Guidelines, as it contains valuable information about translating OA materials into other languages.
3. When OA Literature is updated, it is recommended that Service Boards selling existing stock insert an errata slip when detailing the most recent changes.
4. Be aware that there may be people in other regions/countries working on translations in your own language. Consider keeping in touch with them.

II. Creation of a Translation Committee

If you are starting OA in your country, you probably have a lot of work ahead of you. Before you can think about an OA group or any service structure you need to have some translated material. It is very common that in the beginning this service is carried out by one or more committed members, but the earlier you can form a Translation Committee the better. This will avoid too much dependence on specific members and also form a structure that can enable the process to develop smoothly.

A. Members of a Translation Committee

The Translation Committee should have a list of people that update the OA literature in the different countries. These members should have information about all changes in OA literature.

When you express the need to translate OA materials many OA members will likely volunteer to assist. At first it seems a very easy and attractive job. However, very few of them will really go ahead with the task, why?

1. Many people think that all you need is to speak English well. As a matter of fact, the level of your English is just one among other talents required to perform a good translation. For example, you may have a good understanding of English but you may not know how to verbalize an English text in your own language.
2. Others are willing to translate until they find out that the material is not as interesting as they thought it would be. They decide maybe it is not so important and postpone the translation indefinitely.

3. Some members are not mature enough in the program to assist. You will need to understand the full meaning of a text to translate it otherwise the translation can either become senseless or alter the original meaning and intention. Try to be careful with literal translations. It is necessary to pay attention to the general meaning of the text in its original form and to its translated form in your own language, but it has to make sense in the end.
4. Remember that people come and go. A lot of people enter the program full of energy and willing to do service. However, not many assume real responsibility, especially in the long term. So, don't give them the original material, always a photocopy. Make a list of all the people involved with the committee, as well as who is doing what. If possible, talk to them once in a while to see how things are going. And don't forget to ask them to copy the translation onto a floppy disk for you or send to you electronically (that will make your life a lot easier).

B. Translation an Individual and a Group Effort

Try to show people that this kind of service is not something that you do completely alone, in your own time and pace and in your own way. Help them to realize that they are part of a committee and that the work of others should be taken into account.

As much as each one of us has our own style, there should be some general standards to be followed.

1. A glossary with the translation of key terms will not only facilitate the translation work, but also will help a great deal in creating a general standard.
2. Using former translations as a reference can be very helpful, especially when you find quotes from other pieces of literature (even from AA, although their translation choices are not necessary the best ones).
3. Always keep members in touch with each other, and if possible promote committee meetings once in a while to discuss problematic points.
4. As important as it is to promote group work and not rely too much upon one individual, it is advisable that you use one single person when translating a book, so that you don't have many different translation styles in a single piece of literature, which might make the translation a little awkward.
5. If OA members are doing translation a team could be formed and one person translates the literature and another checks it. One helpful suggestion is that two members get together to review the translation. One will read the translation out loud in your own language, and the other will follow it in the English version. This way you will not only make sure the translation sounds good in your language, but can also check how accurate it is in relation to the English version.
6. As to the International Translation & Publishing Guidelines outline, it is important to have other OA members checking the translated material. Not only for the accuracy of the translation, but also to help with problems concerning the style in your own language. Of course, always ensure that the translation is exactly the same as the original.
7. In spite of all the problems we might have when using OA members as translators, they are always the best choice. No professional translator, as good as they might be, will understand our literature so well. Being so versed in the subject, we make the best translators ever. And we will certainly put much more effort and love in this task than a professional. However, if you do not have qualified members you may of course use professionals.
8. Also, make sure that you review the translation carefully after it has been delivered to you to make sure everything is correct as far as the content is concerned.
9. Finally, before printing, make a careful review for typographical errors. There is always a little thing that can be overlooked even after a lot of work.

C. Professional Translators

Drawbacks of using OA members have been mentioned i.e. length of time for the work etc. In this respect it was stressed that where possible a professional translator was to be used. In the past

OA members had been used and this had lead to major delays and even loss of texts! In regard to professionals, it is best to give them a glossary of common terms and how you have been translating them (in case you already have something translated). When choosing a professional translator give him/her a small piece of literature to be translated. If you like the translation give him/her more work. If not try the same thing again with someone else. No professional translators can do a better job than qualified OA members, unless we give them good Glossaries to rely on.

1. Use of a Contract

- a. It is very important the use of a Contract with the translator right from the beginning so that both parties understand fully what is being asked of the translator and in what time factor.
- b. It was suggested that the arrangements include resisting any possible attempts by the translator to put his/her name to the document or to include 'further reading' of an outside nature.
- c. It was stated that in circumstances where the Professional Translator does not accept the OA Glossary then 'he is not the person to do the translation – find another'.
- d. When choosing a professional translator give him/her a small piece of literature to be translated. If you like the translation give him/her more work. If not try the same thing again with someone else.

III. Glossary of Terms

It's very important the compilation and use of a GLOSSARY – by OA members who are translating, local translators and professional translators as well as being sent off with the draft for approval. This glossary can be compiled by a dedicated sub committee of the National Language Service Board – agreed upon in group conscience and added to if necessary over time.

IV. Priorities for Translation Work

To begin with, such a committee could select, in a democratic and sensible manner, what are the priorities for the translation work. Of course the first thing that you will need is the latest English version of the literature. Every once in a while the literature is revised at the World Service Business Conference and you may have an outdated version.

V. Urgent Service Material Translation

In addition, there will always be service related materials that need urgent translation. It's very common that we receive a lot of service material in English, all of them requiring responses in a very short period of time. Usually this is because it already took a long time for the material to arrive.

1. There may be some materials that you receive and your members don't understand what "they" are talking about. Some issues are simply not part of our lives and the OA service structure is not as obvious for the different cultures. In this case you can add footnotes explaining the issues and giving further information regarding the context in which they were raised.
2. The best thing to do, when you don't have much time to translate everything, is to highlight the most important information from the material and use it in your own newsletter or in other mediums to distribute information about service (e.g. Releases, announcements at the Intergroup meetings, etc.).
3. Some Intergroups have special newsletters just to summarize the most important information that come from the WSO and the Region.

VI. Region 9 Policy for Financial Support of Literature Translations

To provide funding for the professional translation and/or printing of Literature is a very important issue and reflects the feelings of the Assembly that when funds are available we should be spending them on getting the message out to those in the Region who do not speak English. Applications will be considered by the Officers. This policy gives the Treasurer the authority to make the payments in the year and clarifies the procedures for that payment.

VII. World Service Office

Once we have translated a piece of literature we have to send it to WSO for approval. That means we have to send a copy of the translation to the trustee in charge of this committee. We shall include the year in which the original piece was published. Usually they prefer an electronic copy in Word.

VIII. Copyright Legend

Apart from the English title of the document translated, the copyright notice needs to be in the language of the translation.

“Translated and reprinted from (*English name of the document, and its reference number*)____ the edition with the copyright date_____ Copyright © (*date of the translation*) of the (*language of the*) translation by Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. World Service Office, 6075 Zenith Court, Rio Rancho, NM 87144-6424. Mail Address: P.O. Box 44020, Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020, USA +01 (505) 891-2664, With the permission of OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS, INC. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without the prior written consent of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.”

IX. Reaching Out

We tried through these guidelines to share as much information and experience as we could, but we are aware that other problems may always come up, as they usually do. In this case, the best suggestion we can give is that you reach out and look for those with more experience in this area. You can do this through our Region, where there are certainly a good number of Intergroups that are surely facing or have faced similar problems.