TRANSLATION AND CULTURAL VALIDATION OF THE LCSS

Oxford Outcomes

Introduction: Methodology – The overall approach

The majority of QoL questionnaires have been developed in the English language (primarily US English) and it is therefore necessary to undergo a translation process in order for the questionnaires to be used in multi-national studies. Comparable observations in a multi-national study can only be made if the original questionnaire and the translation are equivalent. Researchers in this area agree that if one wishes to carry out cross-culturally comparable assessments, conceptual equivalence of the construct to be measured between cultures is a necessary prerequisite, semantic or linguistic equivalence on its own not guaranteeing intercultural relevance of a questionnaire. Bice and Kalimo (1971) distinguish between conceptual and semantic equivalence. According to them, semantic equivalence refers to an equivalence of meaning and formulation (question wording). As for conceptual equivalence, this is achieved when answers to the same questions reflect the same concept which can be meaningfully discussed in each of the cultures concerned. To get the best quality translation of a QoL questionnaire it is therefore necessary to follow a strict methodology with important quality control checks.
The process of translating a QoL questionnaire into one or more target languages can be broken down into the following steps:

1) Forward translation
2) Reconciliation meeting
3) Back translation (quality control)
4) Pilot-test
5) Final reconciliation

The aim of each step is to add quality to the preceding one in terms of conceptual equivalence between source and target versions, to produce a final version.

Forward Translation

It is common practice for at least two forward translations to be completed and reconciled because of the subjective nature of translation. However, having more than one forward translation tends to be more important when the questionnaire being translated is complex and less of a symptom measure than is the case with the LCSS. The methodology suggested by the developers of the LCSS which includes a single forward translation is considered to be adequate.

Backward Translation

Two independent backward translations of the reconciled questionnaire were completed. The back translations are reviewed in relation to the source questionnaire by Oxford Outcomes who then liaised with the forward translator to develop a reconciled version.

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Pilot Testing

The reasons for conducting a pilot test with a newly-translated questionnaire are as follows:

- To assess the comprehensibility of the translation
- To test any translation alternatives which have not been resolved by the translators
- To identify any items which may be inappropriate at a conceptual level.

The pilot testing is conducted using a face-to-face interview format. Respondents are asked to complete the questionnaire while 'thinking aloud' to the interviewer. The respondent is asked to 'think aloud' to the interviewer about what they take each item to mean. From this process the interviewer can get a sense of the meaning of the item, any misunderstandings that are occurring, and the ease of response.

After the respondent has completed this process he/she is asked a series of open-ended questions about the questionnaire.
These are as follows:

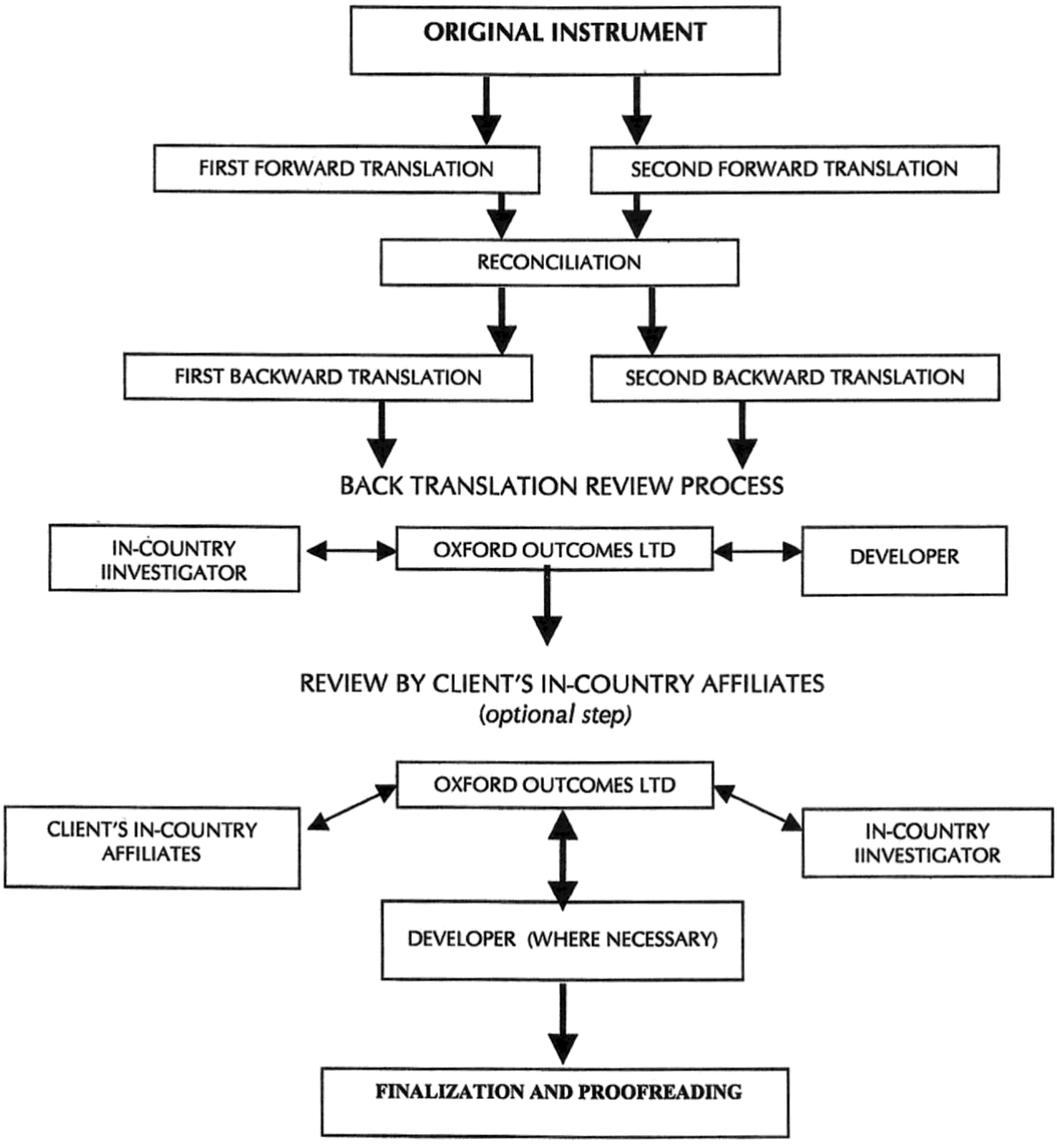
- Did you have any problems with the wording or phrasing of the questionnaire?
- Were there any questions which were difficult to answer?
- Did you have any problems with the choice of answers on the questionnaire?
- Did you feel there were any important issues missing from the questionnaire?
- Did you have any difficulty understanding or following the instructions?
- What was your overall impression of the questionnaire?

For the purposes of this study, each newly-translated instrument has been pilot tested in-country. 7 lung cancer patients were recruited in each country through hospital clinics.

The results of the pilot test interviews were analyzed by the collaborator, discussed with the forward and back translators where necessary, and discussed with the Project Director at Oxford Outcomes. As a result of these discussions a final reconciled translation for each language was produced.

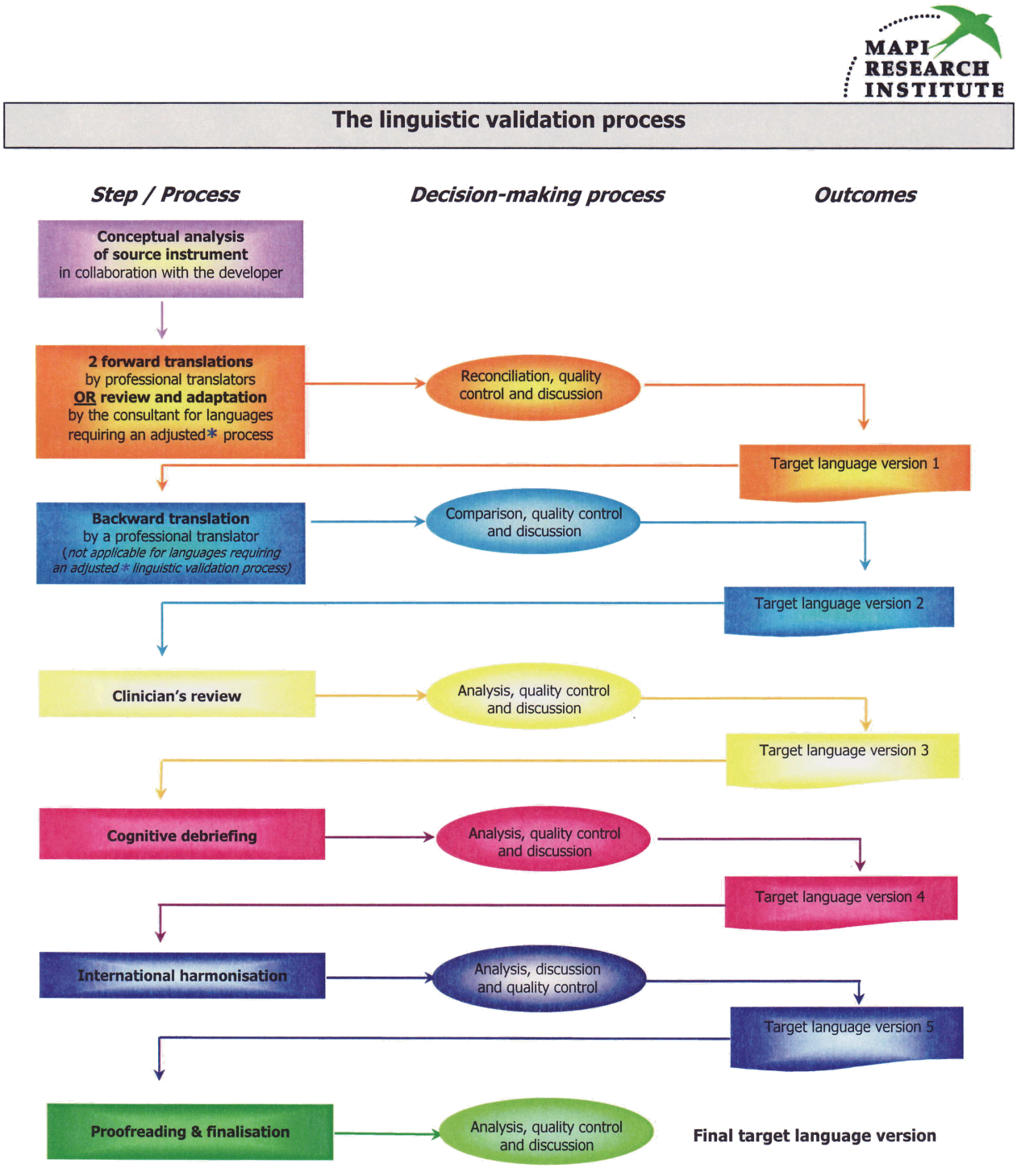
For translation diagrams, please see next pages.

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https://www.iconplc.com/solutions/language-services/linguistic-validation



* For some languages that are close to one another (e.g. British and American English; French for France and Belgium), the complete standard linguistic validation process outlined above with *forward* and *backward* translation steps may not be appropriate. For such cases, an **adjusted** linguistic validation process has been established. The *forward* and *backward* translation steps are replaced by a review and adaptation step, where the work is based on a version considered as the "mother language" version. The subsequent steps are identical to those used in the standard linguistic validation process.

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