

# Project management

## In brief



SPA [Gestión de proyectos](#)

### ◀ origins

From Latin [proiectus](#), of the Latin verb [proiectāre](#), an intensive form of [prōiciō, prōicere](#) («[arrojar](#)»), comprised by [prō](#) (“for, to, forward”) and the verb [iaciō, iacere](#) (“throw”).

### ☰ abstract

A *project* could be defined as ‘a set of related and planned activities, which, upon completion, produce some pre-defined deliverables’ (Arevalillo-Doval 2016: 18).

The scenario of the language service industry in general and of translation in particular has undergone a radical change through the unstoppable technological development, whose implementation in the professional world has led to the emergence of new disciplines and

professional specialisations. The image of the isolated translator has become that of a highly specialised professional linguist (or at least they are called so in this industry) capable of undertaking various tasks. Likewise, the increased translatable volumes and the omnipresence of localisation has led to a continuous flow of projects with different professional profiles and an endless series of specialised technological applications.

This current multi-disciplinary nature focuses on one of the most specialised profiles: the project manager. Indeed, project management is a core process in the language industry, since it brings together a huge series of roles that enable the entire translation process flow. This is recognised by the international quality standard for translation services [ISO-17100](#), an industry reference, which lists all the functions of project management in pre-production, production and post-production.


Project management does not take place on its own but depends on numerous factors both internal and external to the company where it takes place. All of these influences impact different management styles in different ways: the processes that take place from the time a customer requests a translation project to the time it is completed and delivered to that customer are exactly the same, but the way they are implemented and performed differs according to the principles and ways of working of each company.

In this article we will cover all these aspects and develop everything that happens in the processes so that readers can have an overview of this whole procedure and the key importance it has in the language industry: a professional profile, and a necessary and vital specialisation for any organisation regardless of its size.



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# Entry



## ESP Gestión de proyectos

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## Introduction

The world of translation has undergone an undoubted revolution in recent years, to a large extent fostered by the application of computers to the translator's daily work. In fact, in a relatively short period of time, the translator has passed from working with the traditional typewriter to handling the most powerful word processors and the most complex comprehensive, specific programmes on the market. A good example of this evolution has been the early disappearance of the dictaphone, once one of the favourite devices of old-school translators, which long ago became a museum piece when it was replaced by software that allowed the translator to dictate the

sight translation to the computer, which then interpreted the text and typed it on screen with a surprisingly high accuracy rate.

Computer-aided translation software was as big a turning point in translation industry as was the appearance of the personal computer in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when computing became a part of every aspect of our lives. These advances have grown in geometric proportion to the present day, so that professional translators are faced with a large number of tools at their disposal that allow for greater productivity, efficiency and speed in his daily work, as well as an aid to organise their tasks and files in a more orderly fashion. As we said, technology is constantly evolving and impacting our daily lives, so it is not surprising that some advances, such as machine translation, have become a regular companion. So much so that, in the case of machine translation, they have even given rise to a new professional profile: post-editing, an increasingly sought-after speciality in which there are still not enough specialised professionals. In fact, this is one of the best examples of the interdependence of applied technology. Nowadays, translators' work is inconceivable without these tools and other tools specific to the industry. There is no doubt that information technology has brought translators out of their legendary isolation and has opened up a wide range of resources of all kinds that make their work easier to an extent that was unthinkable until very recently: the Internet, computer-aided translation programmes, word processors, terminology tools and other programmes shared with other industries have boosted the productivity of today's translators.

At the same time, and in parallel with the change undergone, the material to be translated has grown in geometric proportion, not only in terms of quantity but also the complexity of the formats to be handled. In order to cope with the new situation, that figure of the old-fashioned translator and their work has experienced a

metamorphosis, often making them part of a larger, multi-disciplinary team that aims to cover the entire translation process, from the arrival of the original text to the delivery of the translation. As an increasing number of translations require this processing, and as the market requires ever tighter deadlines, the management of these projects is essential for their success.

Translation project management encompasses a large number of tasks of varying degrees of importance that can have a decisive impact on the success of a given project. It should not be forgotten that the freelance translator functions as a one-man business, and therefore brings together all the functions that in a company are performed by different individuals with different responsibilities. For this reason, it is very important to be able to understand the working environment in which translation companies and translators operate.

The entire environment surrounding the professional translator influences the way a company and a translator work. Although project management and its various phases are clearly defined for everyone by professional usage itself and by the quality standard for translation services ISO-17100, the interpretation of each of them in their implementation may differ to a greater or lesser extent depending on the different conceptions and visions of these influences held by the various companies and translators. For this reason, management patterns, although similar, may show significant differences in the weighting of the different phases, which we will see later on: one company may pay more attention to the pre-production phase; others, to the production phase... Within each macro-phase, some will give prevalence to budgeting; others, to review; others, to final quality control, and as many combinations as we can think of.

That is why we are going to study the ecosystem of the translation and localisation industry, so that we can have a clear vision of the

different variables and influences that exist in the real professional world, whether as an employee of a company or as a freelance translator. Remember that a project manager will have to adapt to the company's general and project management style, which, in turn, will be marked by relationships that have been defined over years of activity.

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## **¶ The professional environment of translation industry and its relationship with project management**

In order to have a proper understanding of what is involved in a translation company, it is necessary to know what its scope is and what internal and external forces influence it. These forces play a decisive role in most cases and determine business paths.

From this general scope, we will move down to the companies and within them to learn about their structures, to see how these forces impact them and finally to get to the professionals who work in them: translators, revisers, reviewers, proofreaders, project managers, language engineers and a good number of other specialities.

The translation industry is in flux and has undergone a significant evolution in recent decades. Towards the end of the last century, translators were considered as isolated professionals in their world of books and dictionaries. This image faded even before the end of the century. The advances promoted by the different generations of computers since the advent of computing were unstoppable, and gradually translators, as in other industries, took advantage of technology, and over the years even saw the emergence of specialised translation software.

The evolution was, is and will be unstoppable. Thus, Oroszi (2018) considers the following in this regard: "It's our job to show our customers that they can introduce new possibilities into their workflows and integrate complex translation technology systems". To exemplify this, he uses the comparison between localisation and the case that occurred in the automotive industry with the emergence of robotics, which was supposed to replace humans. Far from it, technology did not destroy their jobs in that industry, though automation led to a redefinition of the workers' value, which facilitated a real revolution in the automotive industry. The same has happened in the language industry with the emergence of new profiles and new specialities, opening up a wide range of services that must find their place in management itself.

There are many factors at play in the international translation industry. Technology is changing the way companies and their customers manage globalisation. Augmented translation, neural machine translation, automated content and automated project management all take advantage of cutting-edge technology such as *big data* and *artificial* intelligence. Such is the importance of the technology that one only has to look at Nimdzi's (2021) language technology atlas to see the universe of applications. The vast majority of those tools are part of the project manager's scenario and this project manager will have to deal with them in their day-to-day work in some sense.

Companies and translators do not work in an influence-free environment, but are integrated into various professional, regulatory and other structures. Thus, a translation company is influenced by its relationship with its own employees and external collaborators; in turn, the company, as a whole, is influenced by the various



*Industry's influences on companies and*



professional organisations — usually associations of translation companies and translators— in various ways: standards, recommendations, codes of ethics, specific agreements, etc. At the same time, these national associations are influenced by their international counterparts. Finally, there is that vertical industry made up of the customers, who set their various standards for the horizontal industry of the language industry. In this same layer there are also standardisation bodies that set quality standards or technical specifications that impact the operation of the industry on various fronts, sometimes even on a regulatory basis. Universities move between all these layers, as they try to acquire, with greater or lesser success, as much information as possible from the professional world in order to incorporate it into their academic programmes so as to facilitate the incorporation of their graduates into the real world. In the following graph we try to represent all this interdependence between the various layers that make up the language industry: these layers exert a centripetal force that ultimately falls on companies and professionals. These forces lead each to implement their own business management pattern, which directly influences the project management pattern to fit different standards, specifications, needs, regulations and any other aspects.

*translators.*[Source: Author].



As can be seen from the above, it is essential to understand the environment in which professionals in the translation industry operate in order to know where to position themselves within the global scenario of professional activities. The translation industry is highly developed and there are many forces converging and increasing specialisation. As a standard, professionals are confronted with a wide

*Professional translator's desktop tools.* [Source: Author].

range of tools that they use in their daily work. When the profile of this professional is that of a project manager, it is understood that they are an experienced professionals who, if possible, have gone through the stages of translator and even reviser. If this is the case, they will have a more precise vision of the requirements of customers, companies and other stakeholders, and will have first-hand knowledge of all the influences that shape their work. In the image below, we have provided a non-exhaustive representation of the usual working environment of a language industry professional and the different levels of professional tools that come into play in their work.

Therefore, the development of IT in the translation industry has been unstoppable in recent decades. This has led to a change in the perception of the challenges in this industry. For this reason, we understand that, before getting into the different tasks that a project manager performs, it is essential to focus on everything that concerns them from any point of view, as a preliminary step to their work.

Nevertheless, the organisation can suffer from external forces acting on it, as mentioned above. Thus, Beninatto and Johnson (2017: 11) set out the core functions in a translation company, namely *supplier management, project management and sales*, which are the backbone of a company's management by bringing value to it. They should never be missing in one way or another. In turn, there is a number of supporting activities — leadership, structure, culture, finance, facilities and human resources, technology and quality assurance— that provide a framework to minimise the risks and maximise the impact of the core functions. In turn, outside the circle of supporting activities are the industry forces that can guide us to risk or success: new market entrants, customers, substitutes, rivalry and suppliers.

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## → Main features in a project

The concept of a project can vary considerably depending on the type of work undertaken. As it has a very broad meaning, it is not the same to undertake a civil engineering project as a documentation project. Therefore, as a starting point, it is useful to see how it is defined in dictionaries. In the Royal Academy of Spanish Language's Dictionary ([DLE](#)) we find five meanings, of which only two fit the idea we are dealing with:

- A set of writings, calculations and drawings that are made to give an idea of what an architectural or engineering work is to look like and what it is to cost.
- The first outline or plan of any work that is sometimes done as a test before it is given its final form.

From these two definitions, we see a first meaning that is very specific to the domains of architecture and engineering, the originators of this type of work organisation. On the other hand, the second meaning is more general and can basically be adjusted to any work environment or speciality, although it contains a tinge of provisionality that does not correspond to its use in the field of translation, since it covers activities that are not provisional but more or less definitive.

On the other hand, in [Webster's](#), perhaps more accustomed to the presence of this concept in the Anglo-Saxon professional world in general and to its pragmatic character, it is defined as follows:

- *A specific plan or design.*
- *A planned undertaking.*

If we go into more specialised definitions, new essential features of projects in business can be detected. The [Project Management Institute](#) (2004: 5) defines a project as follows: "A project is a

temporary endeavour undertaken to achieve a particular aim. Projects differ from operations in that operations are ongoing and repetitive while projects are temporary and unique”.

The difference between *projects* and *operations* is very important, as, although it outlines their respective peculiarities, it puts both on the same level of everyday life. The main distinction lies in their temporal relationship: projects have a defined framework with a beginning and an end, while operations are continuous. Operations imply continuity, more or less of the same thing. On the other hand, projects are linear. This temporality is probably one of the most essential features of projects. However, other authors add another very important feature to the concept of a project, which is its recurrence over time: for example, a project to develop a new computer system consists of a number of interrelated projects.

Indeed, the recurrence of projects is beyond doubt, especially in the translation industry when there are updates to already translated texts, which is becoming increasingly frequent with Internet content and the rapid succession of product versions on the market and the current trend towards continuous localisation. In no case does this recurrence mean repetitiveness, as each project involves activities or tasks that may differ from one another, even if they share a common core in terms of the most common tasks.

A project could be defined as “the set of related (or at least related) and planned activities that, when completed, produce predefined results” (Arevalillo-Doval 2016: 18). The backbone is the inter-relationship between these activities since the completion of one usually leads to the start of another. All projects obviously have a beginning and an end, so they are framed in a time frame; moreover, the costs incurred during their realisation play a fundamental role in their completion with due quality. For all these reasons, the success of

a project will depend on meeting the deadlines, according to the specific budget and the desired quality. However, controlling these three variables is extremely difficult, so rational planning is essential.

Notwithstanding, all of the above would be of no use if the ultimate goal is not achieved: to cover all the customer's requirements and to satisfy the customer and ensure continuity. Therefore, if we wish to undertake proper planning, not only must we take our own needs into account, but also those of the customer, who, after all, is the one requesting the translation service and who is most interested in receiving a translation within the agreed deadlines, at the budgeted cost (or lower, if possible) and with the highest quality allowed by the original text or the customer's specifications in complex localisation projects.

An additional problem in this respect is that the customer's expectations may differ greatly from what they actually want or what they intend to pay for the service. Sometimes this may be due to a lack of knowledge of the service they are requesting and all that surrounds it; sometimes, it may be due to a hidden intention of the customer to take advantage of a confusing situation. Hence, the first task of a project manager, immediately after the first contact with the customer's request, is to determine clearly what the customer wants or what they think they want and what they can get in return for what they intend to pay, and then to check whether we are able to provide that service under the actual project conditions. In short, when the customer does not know the essence of the translation or localisation service they intend to request, it is the job of the project manager or the person involved in the first contact, depending on the company's organization. The goal of this is *educate* the customer and make them see the reality of the process and the tasks involved in order to reach an agreement between both parties that closes the gap between what

the customer wants and what the language service provider can offer them in terms of volume, deadlines and quality.

As a starting point, it can be stated that projects are conceived, planned, implemented, monitored and reviewed. This assumption is the backbone of a project, but a number of milestones must also be set to serve as a boundary between one phase and another, although it is true that phases may overlap in order to meet specific requirements. In any case, projects are divided into phases, and the quality control of the project is ensured by the exact fulfilment of each phase.

As stated above, projects are time-bound and have a unique character, as each project applies to specific needs covered by a product or service. But project planning —mainly in the field of translation— is also an iterative process: many aspects of the project or of a particular phase are eligible to repetition in a given environment; hence the emergence of translation memories, which came into being with the cost-saving intention of the large multi-national translation companies, which launched new versions and updates of products on the market, largely reusing previous versions.

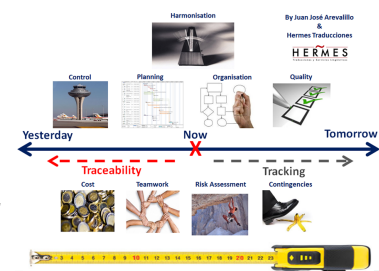
Anticipating risks (what may and is expected to happen) and contingencies (what may and is not necessarily expected to happen) has a major influence on the ultimate success of the project and allows us to manoeuvre within a calculated margin of error.

Anticipating potential problems can provide a buffer to help us manage and anticipate potential deviations. For example, the potential delay that could be caused by a problem with the performance of a translation memory program with a large file size where tables predominate or where there are sudden automatic changes in the formatting of typefaces can be covered by additional time included in

the delivery date. It is even more than desirable to set aside additional time to account for unexpected problems. These precautions should be in place at the time the translation request is received, so that we do not get our hands tied with a deadline that is too tight. Hence the importance of having an experienced project manager able to listen to the translators' views on conflicts between the source text or the project brief and the applications to be used.

In addition, project manager should prepare a set of project-specific templates or procedures that they usually apply so that they can fit into the customer's quality requirements, which are self-imposed by the vendor through a quality standard.

The existence of an efficient methodology will allow for a smoother flow of communication between the various project participants and avoid certain failure in the project management. It is not uncommon for misunderstandings of the customer wishes to arise in day-to-day business because customers are not always fully aware of the basic principles of the translation process and therefore take for granted certain situations that are not so or, on the contrary, do not provide all the necessary information to the project manager, who must *fight* with the customer to reduce this possible communication gap between customer and supplier as much as possible.



*The three core variables in project management*  
[Source: Author]

To sum up, not everything in translation project management can be objectively assessed. But what many authors, both theoreticians and practitioners, do agree on is the existence of three key aspects, the core variables: deadlines, costs and quality.

Thus, Lock (2003: 26), when defining project goals in a general scope applicable to all industries, states that sometimes it is necessary to identify one of the three main objectives —quality, cost and time—, and give it special importance. This fact of the preponderance of one variable over the others is also confirmed by Pailhé (2004: 11): “This shows us that you cannot focus on one qualitative aspect without detrimentally affecting the other”.

From a similar perspective, but with other variables, O'Connell (1996: 9), halfway between general and specific translation projects: “Function (functionality, delivery date, effort, quality) = constant. [...] If you change any of these variables, then all the others will change correspondingly”. In any case, all three variables are present, directly or indirectly.

Pailhé (2004: 12), in an absolutely pragmatic line as the result of personal daily experience, agrees on the three variables, but adds a very important nuance: cost reduction, a recurrent topic in the professional world, leads to an imbalance of the three variables, generally to the detriment of quality and to the benefit of deadlines.

With the same idea, Larsen (2002: 26) leaves no room for doubt when, referring to the translation industry, she states that professional translators need to understand the customers' point of view: what their requirements are in terms of time, quality and cost. The project delivery will be based on these criteria. As if that were not enough, they must also meet pre-set targets for internal profitability, productivity and quality.

Larsen, who also keeps a more pragmatic approach, while agreeing with the theoreticians, and mentions the three variables and, in addition, introduces two other concepts: internal profitability and productivity, which are fundamental to the survival of a translation company and which are undoubtedly subordinated to deadlines and



costs. In fact, an increasing number of companies in all fields are strictly controlling productivity. In his fieldwork on performance management systems in the Spanish company Hermes Traducciones y Servicios Lingüísticos, Gil (2003: 19) identifies the need to measure productivity and the impact it has on the individual performance of employees and the company itself.

The need to quantify productivity is the first touchstone when preparing a project, since the wordcount per day that a translator can handle is the cornerstone of the project, and all budgets for deadlines and costs will revolve around it. For this reason, Devaux (2000) confirms the importance of productivity with the idea that you can only improve what you can measure. Therefore, it is necessary to define quantifiable criteria for the three variables, which are essential to determine the overall performance, as Stoeller (2004: 4) says: “A metric against which to measure project performance in terms of progress, money spent and quality is necessary”.



*Global overview of project management* [Source: Author & Hermes Traducciones]

Therefore, in order to summarise, we can state that these three core variables with some variations or additions are present in all translation projects, and it will be the project managers who will have to deal with these three variables: the more regular the equilateral triangle is, the more efficient the manager's work will be

Now, we can have a map of inter-relationships in project management, which project managers must balance and provide in

their daily work. In the following graph we can see these characteristics and their degree of inter-relationship: the three core variables from which project managers start their work: costs, quality and deadlines —represented by the timeline—, and the additional ones that managers must control, considering that their traceability and tracking obliges us to record everything in order to trace them backwards and forwards so that the whole project can be under control. Finally, all the processes, absolutely all of them, must be quantifiable, so everything must be measured by means of indicators that mark the degree of completion, efficiency and compliance.

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## **Translation management - phases**

The way in which phases and tasks are organised and structured are highly variable and depend on how each organisation understands its own workflow and the influences of the industry and all stakeholders, so the boundary between phases and tasks may in more than one case be unclear and overlapping. However, the international quality standard UNE EN ISO 17100 (UNE 2015) for translation services makes direct reference to project management and its responsibilities, a novelty compared to its European predecessor UNE EN 15038 (UNE 2006), which, although it was mentioned, was limited to merely mentioning it and listing procedures. It is true that a certain order of implementation could be deduced from this list, but at no point did it refer to these responsibilities.

The ISO 1700 standard states three macro-phases ruling over the management organization in any translation or localisation project:

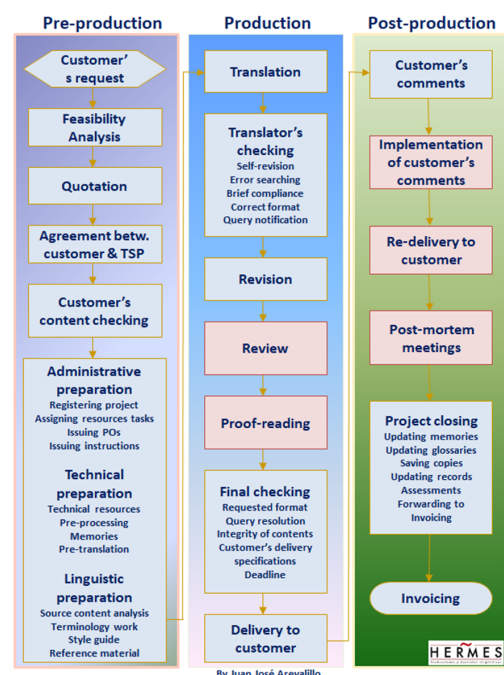
- Pre-production: from the customer's request to the allocation of tasks and resources, and pre-translation. Basically, the project

approval and the establishment of its specifications, namely, the brief.

- Production: from translation to delivery to the customer, including the translation itself, revision, review and proofreading, DTP and quality control in general.
- Post-production: from delivery to the customer until project closure and invoicing, including review by the customer and the introduction of changes based on this, checking customer satisfaction and incorporating customer comments into future project specifications.

Each of these three macro-phases involves a list of tasks that run parallel to them and constitute them. All these macro-phases will fit into a project depending on the methodology in use, so the tasks will be equally well matched. The main tasks, which are rarely missing, are those detailed in the graph below, for which project managers have full responsibility (the ones in blue background are compulsory; the rest are optional):

Undoubtedly, pre-production is a mission-critical macro-phase for the subsequent development of the project, as it is where the specifications (the *translation brief*) that will accompany the project throughout its life cycle are established. From the very moment the customer contacts the translation company or translator, it is necessary to check the feasibility of the project in terms of requested volume, deadlines and language pairs. Once the feasibility has been confirmed, we then draw up a quotation. This step is fundamental



*Broken down translation project management*

because the pillars we have already mentioned come into play: price and deadline, for which the production costs and the internal deadline will have been considered beforehand in order to meet the deadline required by the customer with the demanded quality. At this stage of the quotation, it is necessary to master the concepts of *total* and *weighted* words, which will enable the cost and deadline calculations to be carried out accurately. This estimate may also include the specific conditions of the project, which may vary considerably. If the customer approves this quotation, we must formalise all the documentation that will enable the actual project to get underway: contracts, orders, specifications or the signed quotation itself.

*workflow* [Source: Author & Hermes Traducciones]

Afterwards, we must check that we have the latest material to start working with and prepare it in its different aspects: administrative, technical and linguistic. These three aspects will be crucial in the future development of the project, as the subsequent tasks will depend on the different specifications and instructions generated here, as well as on the degree of accuracy and granularity of these specifications in each and every phase.

Once the preparation is complete, we move on to the production phase, which basically consists of translating according to the brief. Once translators have finished their translation, after self-revision, they will pass the material on to the project manager, who will forward it to the reviser, and also to the reviewer when necessary. Bilingual revision is at the heart of the ISO 17100 standard because it is the first, mandatory step in quality control. It must be carried out by a professional other than the translator. This may be followed by review, also known as specialist's monolingual review or domain review, which is optional depending on the project. In certain contexts, the reviser and the reviewer may be done by the same person and

proofread at the same time. Proofreading may also take place once the translation has been converted into the final format for delivery by checking the correct typographical layout of the translation and the absence of typos.

At the end of this complete quality control process, which may use specialised and semi-automated tools, all the project material is passed on to the project manager for final checking and delivery to the customer.

This is followed by post-production, based on feedback from the customer, which may require specific changes. If so, a second handover will take place and, under normal circumstances, the project will be closed, and the various elements properly archived and invoiced. This is the end of the project manager's work. As it can be seen, this is a very varied activity, as each phase has its own peculiarities, but it is in pre-production where the work is most important because of the domino effect it can have on the rest of phases and tasks.

In this whole process, project managers play a key role, as they are the pivot around which the whole activity revolves. Project managers often have a linguistic or translation background, but it is increasingly common to find mere managers who have had little to do with the work itself, which can lead to difficult situations as they fail to see potential points of conflict and problem areas within a project as they do not know the full context around and may not even be able to properly understand the procedures and resources involved in translation, or some of their nuances.

It is a truism, but sometimes forgotten, that project managers need to know and understand the translation business and the products involved because they will be dealing with different team members,

different languages, last-minute updates and a myriad of other industry issues.

As stated by the translation service quality standard ISO 17100 (UNE 2015: 16-17), project managers must be responsible for the following tasks:

- Identifying the key requirements and translation project specifications during the pre-production process and following the procedures and specifications throughout its production.
- Supervising and monitoring the translation project preparation process.
- Assigning a competent translator or translators to the translation project.
- Assigning a competent reviser or revisers.
- Assigning a competent reviewer or reviewers when necessary.
- Disseminating information, issuing instructions related to the assignment, and managing the translation project to all parties involved.
- Monitoring to ensure compliance with agreed upon schedule and deadlines.
- Communicating any changes of the project specifications , if applicable.
- Monitoring constant conformity to the customer-TSP agreement, project specifications, and, where necessary, communicating with all parties involved in the project, including the customer.
- Ensuring translation and other queries answered.
- Managing and handling of feedback.
- Verifying that the translation service specifications have been complied with before approving the target language content and giving clearance for its delivery to customer.
- Delivering the service.

- If applicable, implementing corrections and/or corrective action.
- Monitoring to ensure the project does not exceed the agreed budget.
- Preparing and issuing the invoice, if applicable.
- Completing other activities or tasks agreed with the customer.

All these functions are present in all the activities mentioned in the previous sections. However, some additional functions may be added to all of the above, depending on the organisational needs of each company, since project managers per se must know their work environment and the project in question. For this reason, in some translation companies, their responsibilities include the translation of part of the project, albeit at a minimum level. This ensures an insider's knowledge of the project and may even bring to light some of the hidden problems that a less experienced translator may overlook or fail to foresee.

It is also a typical case that the customer does not express the due scope of a project, or even does not mention all its details, in which case project managers must try their best to obtain all necessary information from the customer and monitor all deviations that occur between the initial scope of the project and the specifications and plans estimated in the initial budget. This task also involves the accurate control of received and delivered materials or carried out activities that were not foreseen in the project, in order to ensure full invoicing of the work. Such is the importance of this, that it is recommended that all such deviations and contacts with the customer for clarifying these issues should be recorded in writing in your communications for traceability.

Therefore, we could say that project managers are interfacing for their company with the customer, and within their group the global interface of all members, and they must also be able to maintain several

projects at the same time. Therefore, we can say that their skills include the following:

- - knowledge of the IT environment in terms of hardware and software;
  - knowledge of the documentation process in general;
  - knowledge of the company's quality processes and the different functions of each professional profile;
  - expert use of project management software, as well as word processors and spreadsheets;
  - knowledge of computer-assisted translation software in order to make decisions on which tool to use where appropriate;
  - general linguistic and cultural knowledge;
  - good written and verbal communication skills;
  - ability to manage several tasks simultaneously;
  - analytics skills;
  - understanding of the main financial fundamentals;
  - general technical expertise.

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## **Research potential**

Project management is the cornerstone of the translation industry and the position of project managers is one of the most sought-after. One of the reasons for this is the shortage of experienced teaching staff in this field since the very definition of the project manager's job does not make it easy to organise courses due to the breadth of their field of work. Nevertheless, some universities have made many efforts to start offering training in this area in their degree courses and, above all, in post-graduate courses, where they have been offered for many years



now, based more on the personal experience of the lecturers than on real management guidelines.

For all these reasons, we foresee as lines for future research work the global performance management systems within the field of project management and, specifically, the study of revision/review systems as a training tool to reduce the learning curve.

This line of research could clearly benefit not only the professional environments of a company, but also transfer the data to the classroom.

In parallel with the study of these quality assessment systems, the study of productivity is another interesting line of research. The study of both elements —productivity and quality— can shed much light on the overall performance of translators. In the case of productivity, another line of research is post-editing of machine translations, since it is vital for companies to be able to assess the work they receive in translation, so that poor quality is not detrimental to productivity.

In the same way, in connection with the above, another potential line of research is establishing measurement systems for revisers/reviewers and project managers, as these systems currently seem to focus on the translator's role only. Project managers are the driving force and their responsibilities are significant, so it is essential that they have performance benchmarks or KPIs built into the system. Also, the work of the reviser is essential for the management chain to function, so it would be very interesting to look at ways of measuring the reviser's performance.

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