

Chapter 6: TRANSLATION AND VERIFICATION OF THE SURVEY MATERIALS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the procedures used for translation, adaptation and verification for tablet-based PISA-D Strand C materials.

One of the important aspects of quality assurance in PISA-D Strand C is to ensure that the instruments used in all participating countries to assess students' performance provide reliable and comparable information. To achieve this, strict procedures for the localisation (translation, adaptation, and validation) of national versions of all survey instrumentation were implemented in PISA-D Strand C as they were in all rounds of the main PISA assessment.

Source versions of the different documents and instruments were distributed in English and French, and reference versions were distributed in Spanish. In PISA terminology, only the English and French versions have the status of a “source”, meaning they go through a more complex process involving linguists and domain experts trained to determine an acceptable translation. A source version can be the starting point for a translation into another language. For example, the Wolof version for Senegal could be translated from either the French or English source version. Any other language version centrally produced by the Consortium or a previously verified version from another country is referred to as a “reference” version. Even though in PISA-D Strand C there were no procedural differences between the production of the French and English source versions and the Spanish reference versions, it would not be acceptable to translate from Spanish into another language.

The procedures for the translation and validation of instruments included:

- optimising the English source version for translation through a translatability assessment (this was done only for new questionnaire items developed for PISA-D Strand C)
- developing a French source version and a Spanish reference version for questionnaire items that did not exist in Strand B, as well as for the Orientations module and tablet-specific prompts and instructions
- implementing a double translation and reconciliation design
- preparing detailed instructions for the localisation of instruments for the Field Trial and for review of the instruments for the Main Survey
- preparing translation/adaptation guidelines
- training national staff in charge of the translation/adaptation of instruments
- validating the translated/adapted national versions by verifying the translations with independent verifiers: a review by cApStAn staff and the Translation Referee, or the Questionnaires team, and a post-verification review by National Centres (NC), and technical and linguistic final checks.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE FRENCH SOURCE VERSION

Since the inception of the PISA survey, it has been a requirement that the international contractor produces an international French source version of the data collection instruments in addition to the English version. In PISA-D Strand C there was no new item development for the cognitive assessment: the units were borrowed either from the main PISA study, PISA for Schools, PIAAC or LAMP (Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme). In PISA-D Strand C, all units were taken from PISA-D Strands A and B, so for cognitive units the French source version only needed to be updated for the tablet-based delivery mode, which included the following three types of content:

- new prompts needed for the tablet context that were not applicable for the paper-based assessments (mostly instructions asking the respondent to “tap” on something, use the “number keys” or “drag and drop” an item to a different place)
- instructions that were used in the paper-based assessment, but had to be updated (typically instructions related to the position of the stimulus)
- the entire Orientations module (instruction and practice module for the respondent).

For the questionnaires, most content was specific to PISA-D Strand C, so the preparation of the French source included the different cases discussed below.

Translation of new content

New content was developed for the Person Most Knowledgeable (PMK) questionnaire and the Youth Interview. Items from PISA-D Strand B were updated to match the PISA-D Strand C context, such as changing phrases constructed in the first person singular (*I was sick*) from the self-administered Strand B questionnaire to second person singular (*Because you were sick?*) for use in the interviewer-administered Strand C questionnaire.

The procedure used to produce the French source version of PISA-D Strand C test units was similar to what has been used in all previous PISA administrations. The English-to-French translation process has proven to be very effective in detecting residual errors in the English source overlooked by the item developers and in anticipating potential problems for translation into other languages. For PISA-D Strand C, the list of elements requiring national adaptations was refined and further translation notes were added as needed.

The French source version of cognitive items had originally been produced for PISA-D Strand A, or before that for the main PISA study, through the double translation and reconciliation process. This process was followed by a review by a French domain expert on the appropriateness of terminology, and then by another review by a native professional French proofreader for linguistic correctness. In addition, an independent verification of the equivalence between the final English and French versions was performed. Since PISA-D Strand C only administered cognitive items that had already been used in PISA-D Strand A, there was no need to go through this process again. Double translation and reconciliation was not a requirement for the Orientations module or the new prompts within the units. For these, a simpler single translation and review process was applied.

For the context questionnaires, those questionnaire items that were adopted from PISA-D Strand B, or the main PISA study, had the French source version already produced. Any new questionnaire items in PISA-D Strand C were produced through the double translation and reconciliation design.

DEVELOPMENT OF SPANISH REFERENCE VERSION

For PISA-D Strand C, the situation of the Spanish base version was the same as that of the French source: some of the existing content had to be updated to incorporate the new context (interviewer-administered questionnaire vs. self-administered) and the different platform, and the items and instructions that were newly introduced for PISA-D Strand C had to be translated.

DOUBLE TRANSLATION FROM TWO SOURCE LANGUAGES

Back translation has long been the most frequently used method to ensure the linguistic equivalence of test instruments in international surveys. It requires translating the source version of the test (generally English language) into the national languages, then translating them back to English and comparing them with the source version to identify possible discrepancies. A second approach is a double translation procedure (i.e. two independent translations from the source language[s] and reconciliation by a third linguist). This offers two significant advantages in comparison with the back translation design:

- Equivalence of the source and target versions is obtained by using input from three different people (two translators and a reconciler) who all work on both the source and the target versions. In a back translation design, by contrast, the first translator is the only one to simultaneously use the source and target versions.
- Discrepancies are identified directly in the target language instead of in the source language, as would be the case in a back translation design.

Back translation and double translation processes both have a potential disadvantage in that the equivalence of the various national versions depends exclusively on their consistency with a single source version (in general, English). In particular, one would hope for the greatest possible semantic equivalence since the principle is to measure access that students from different countries have to the same concept, through written material presented in different languages. Using a single reference language is likely to give undue importance to the formal characteristics of that language. If a single source language is used, its lexical and syntactic features, stylistic conventions and the typical patterns it uses to organise ideas within sentences will have a greater impact on the target language versions than desired. The recommended approach in PISA-D Strand C therefore builds on the strengths of the double translation approach by using double translation from two different source language versions.

Resorting to two different source languages may, to a certain extent, reduce problems linked to the impact of cultural characteristics of a single source language. Admittedly, both languages used in PISA-D Strand C share an Indo-European origin. However, they do represent relatively different sets of individuals, as they are both spoken in several countries with different geographic locations, traditions, social structures and cultures.

The use of two source languages in PISA-D Strand C results in other advantages such as the following:

- Many translation problems are due to idiosyncrasies: words, idioms or syntactic structures in one language appear untranslatable into a target language. The opportunity to consult the other source version may provide hints for solutions.
- The desirable or acceptable degree of translation freedom is very difficult to determine. A translation that is too faithful to the original version may appear awkward; if it is too free or too literary, it is very likely to jeopardise equivalence across all the national versions. Having two source versions in different languages, with clear guidelines on the amount of translation fidelity/freedom, provides national reconcilers with accurate benchmarks in this respect, which neither back translation nor double translation from a single language could provide.

As in the main PISA study, the double translation and reconciliation procedure was a requirement for all national versions of test and questionnaire instruments that were not adapted from the English or French source, or from the Spanish reference version. It was possible for countries to use the English source version for one of the translations into the national language and the French source version for the other. An efficient alternative method was to perform double translation and reconciliation from one of the source language versions, and extensive cross checks against the second source language version. Countries were required to submit a translation plan documenting national translation and adaptation procedures for the review and approval of the Translation Referee.

In PISA-D Strand C, the only country that would have produced its instruments through the double translation and reconciliation design was Senegal, for their Wolof version. All other countries used the existing translations from Strand A and B, and for any new content, adapted their national version from one of the source or reference versions.

PISA-D STRAND C TRANSLATION AND ADAPTATION GUIDELINES

Translation and Adaptation Guidelines were produced to guide the national teams in the adaptation work of the instruments. The guidelines included:

- instructions on double or single translation. Double translation (and reconciliation) was required for test and questionnaire materials, but not for manuals and other logistic material. In countries where the NPM had difficulty appointing translators competent in translating from both French and English, double translation from English or French only was considered acceptable. In such cases, it was highly recommended to use the other source version for cross-checks during the reconciliation process insofar as possible.
- instructions on recruitment and training of translators
- security requirements on how to store and exchange materials
- references to other documents, including technical guides for translating and reconciling materials
- recommendations to avoid common translation difficulties
- instructions on how to adapt the test material to the national context

- instructions on how to translate and adapt questionnaires and manuals to the national context.

In addition to the generic translation and adaptation guidelines, the translators and reconcilers were given item-specific guidelines within the monitoring sheets that accompanied the materials throughout the localisation process. These guidelines provided guidance for specific translation and adaptation challenges and were the same as those used in Strand A and B. In addition, the national teams were provided with guidelines pointing to links between Strand C and Strand A or B, and in some cases, how items had been changed vs. the paper-based assessment.

TRANSLATION TRAINING SESSION

The NPM Meeting held in April 2016 in Asunción, Paraguay, included sessions on the Field Trial translation/adaptation activities for PISA-D Strand C in which the translation, adaptation and verification processes were presented in detail separately for each component of the survey (context questionnaires and test materials).

PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES, TESTING LANGUAGES AND TRANSLATION/ADAPTATION PROCEDURES

Six countries participated in PISA-D Strand C. Four of the six countries administered Strand C in the same language as in PISA Strands A and B. One country (Panama) joined Strand C without having administered Strands A and B. However, Panama had participated in the main PISA study and was able to use their own PISA trend materials as a starting point. One country (Senegal) administered PISA-D Strand C in one additional language (Wolof) vs. PISA Strands A and B that were administered in French only. Table 5.1 below gives a list of the participating countries indicating the language(s) of the test and translation/adaptation process used.

Table 6.1 Participating countries, testing languages and translation/adaptation process

Country	Testing Language(s)	Translation/Adaptation Process
Guatemala	Spanish	Adaptation from ESP reference version
Honduras	Spanish	Adaptation from ESP reference version
Panama	Spanish	Adaptation from ESP reference version, as well as Panama's own PISA version where applicable
Paraguay	Spanish	Adaptation from ESP reference version
Senegal	French, Wolof	Adaptation/translation from FRA source version
Zambia	English	Adaptation from ENG source version

Since all PISA-D Strand C items are scored automatically, there were no coding guides to translate and adapt.

Only one country (Senegal, for Wolof) needed to translate all the material. All other participating countries were able to use the translations from PISA-D Strands A and B (or the main PISA study, in the case of Panama), and for the new content adapt one of the source versions (English or French) or the Spanish reference version.

INTERNATIONAL VERIFICATION OF THE NATIONAL VERSIONS

As in the main PISA study, one of the most important quality control procedures implemented to ensure high quality standards in the translated assessment materials for PISA-D was the verification of each national version against the English and/or French source versions by an independent team of expert verifiers, appointed and trained by the Consortium. This quality control step was performed for all national versions, regardless of whether they were adapted from one of the source versions, from the Spanish reference version, or double translated from English and/or French.

The main criteria used to recruit verifiers of the various national versions were:

- native command of the target language
- professional experience as a translator from English and/or French into the target language
- when possible, sufficient command of the second source language (either English or French) to be able to use it for cross-checks during verification of the material (note that not all verifiers were proficient in French, but this was mitigated by the fact that the cApStAn reviewers and the Translation Referee had command of French)
- when possible, familiarity with the localisation of assessment materials and questionnaires
- a good level of computer literacy
- when possible, experience as a teacher and/or a higher education degree in psychology, sociology or education.

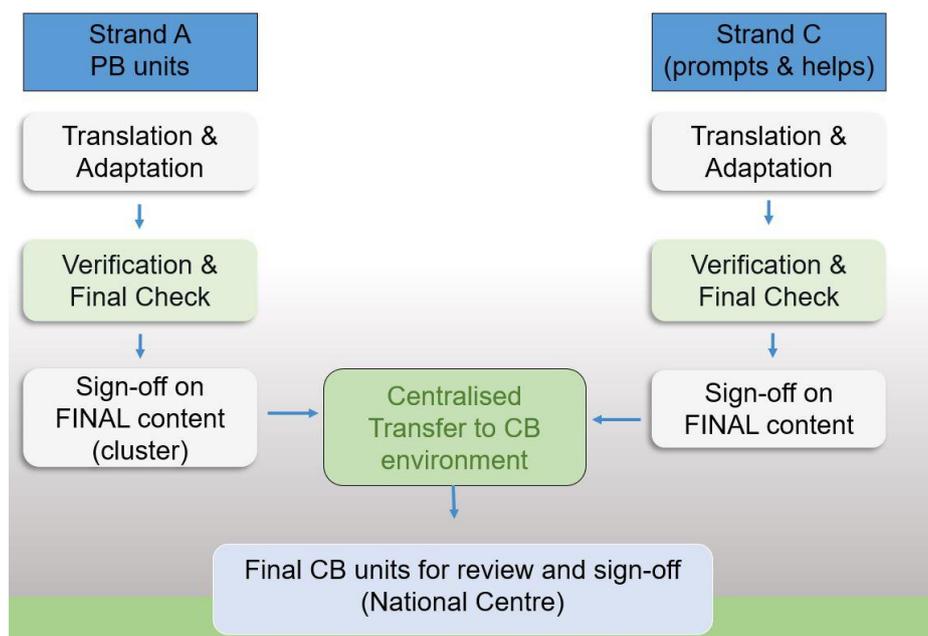
The same verifiers who verified the PISA Strand A and B materials were hired to verify PISA-D Strand C materials as well.

Verification procedures have been continually improved from each PISA round to the next, based on the experience and learning from previous rounds. In PISA 2015 the change from paper- to computer-based delivery mode also brought about changes in the procedures; these were further refined for PISA 2018. In the following subsections we review the procedures implemented in PISA-D Strand C, based on PISA 2018 procedures, for the different components subject to verification.

VERIFICATION OF TEST UNITS (TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED VERSIONS)

All PISA-D Strand A translations were centrally transferred from the finalised PISA-D Strand A files (.docx, *MS Word format*) into the PISA-D Strand C file format (.xliff, *XML Localization Interchange File Format*). These files were then updated with the new content and made available to countries on a previewing platform. National Centres were then asked to review the units and approve the newly translated and updated parts and document any change requests in a specially designed Change Request Form. NCs did not have editing access to the files, to ensure that the translated items remain as identical as possible to the Strand A items.

Figure 6.1 Transfer of content into Strand C file format



For the Wolof version for Senegal, the source files were made available to the country for translation in MS Word format to simplify the translation process for the National Centre, as translating in the .xliff file format would have required the use of a computer-aided translation tool.

For all versions except Wolof, the verifiers were asked to verify the changes that National Centres requested either to the newly translated content or to the already verified content transferred from PISA-D Strand A, which included ensuring that they were:

- in compliance with the general and item-specific guidelines
- equivalent to source version(s)
- linguistically correct
- consistent with the rest of the materials.

For the Wolof version, the verifier was instructed to verify the target version sentence by sentence, comparing to the English or French source, while consulting the TAS (Test Adaptation Spreadsheet) to refer to item-specific guidelines and National Centre comments. The verifier made changes as needed using the track changes feature in Microsoft Word and documenting their interventions in the TAS, including selection of the appropriate intervention category using a drop-down menu.

It was also part of the verifiers' task for all versions to check that the errata (errors identified in source) had been corrected in the target version.

Once the items were verified and reviewed, they were made available to the Translation Referee. The Referee would then review each verifier comment and label any crucial issues that could potentially affect equivalence or item functioning as "requires follow-up". Changes flagged with "requires follow-up" were then negotiated between the Translation Referee and the National Centre. Next, the National Centre uploaded revised Word files (in the case of Wolof) or change request forms (in the case of all other national versions) on the file exchange platform for final check.

In the case of Wolof, the final check reviewer checked the correct implementation of any changes "requiring follow-up" and released the files to the National Centre for a final review. Once the process had been completed using the Word files, the translations were transferred to the .xliff format centrally by the Consortium and made available to the National Centre for a layout review on the reviewing platform.

In the case of all other national versions, the final check reviewer addressed any residual issues raised by the National Centre during the post-verification review, updated the units on the previewing platform and released the Change Request Forms back to the National Centre for a final review.

Since the PISA 2003 Main Survey, the central element and repository of the entire translation, adaptation and verification procedure for test units has been the TAS. Figure 5.2 shows a sample Test Adaptation Spreadsheet from the PISA-D Strand C Field Trial used for the only national version that was fully translated. The aim of the TAS is to function as:

- an aid to translators, reconcilers, and verifiers (through the increasing use of item-specific translation/adaptation guidelines)

- a centralised record of national adaptations, verifier corrections and suggestions
- a medium for conducting discussions between the National Centre and the Translation Referee
- a record of the implementation status of “requires follow-up” issues in test units
- a tool permitting quantitative analysis of verification outcomes.

Figure 6.2 Sample of a Test Adaptation Spreadsheet (TAS) from PISA-D Strand C Field Trial

		COUNTRY REVIEW <i>National Centre</i>			VERIFICATION <i>oApSIAo</i>		REFEREE REVIEW <i>Ééatrice</i>		REVIEW <i>National Centre</i>
ENGLISH SOURCE VERSION	ITEM-SPECIFIC TRANSLATION/ADAPTATION GUIDELINE	BORROWED VERSION (FRA source or ESP base)	NATIONAL VERSION	COUNTRY COMMENT (DESCRIPTION + JUSTIFICATION OF ADAPTATION)	VERIFIER INTERVENTION	VERIFIER COMMENT	TRANSLATION REFEREE COMMENT	CORRECTION STATUS	COUNTRY POST-VERIF COMMENT
TABLE OF APPROXIMATE DISTANCES (in kilometers)	Do not adapt kilometers, but ok to change spelling to “kilometres”	TABLA DE DISTANCIAS APROXIMADAS (en kilómetros)	Tabla de distancias aproximadas (en kilómetros)	We usually write the titles in lowercase.	Layout/Format issue	Changing the formatting in the stimulus is not recommendable, as upper case is used as emphasis that would then be different in this national versions vs. the others. Therefore changed to uppercase by ver.	Agree with verifier and this adaptation was not done in Math units in batch 1. Please accept the verifier correction	REQUIRES FOLLOW-UP	Ok

For national versions that had already been verified either for Strand A or the main PISA study, the form was different, allowing countries to request changes to the new Strand C content.

Figure 6.3 Sample of a Change Request Form (CRF) from PISA-D Strand C Field Trial

SPANISH		COUNTRY REVIEW <i>National Centre</i>			VERIFICATION <i>cApStAn</i>		REFEREE REVIEW <i>Béatrice</i>		COUNTRY REVIEW <i>National Centre</i>
ENGLISH SOURCE VERSION	SPANISH BASE VERSION	ITEM-SPECIFIC TRANSLATION/ADAPTATION GUIDELINE	PROPOSED TARGET VERSION (full sentence in target language)	JUSTIFICATION OF CHANGE REQUEST (for ex. layout issue, discrepancy vs. national Strand A version of the same unit)	VERIFIER INTERVENTION	VERIFIER COMMENT	TRANSLATION REFEREE COMMENT	CORRECTION STATUS	COUNTRY POST-VERIF COMMENT
Refer to "Diving" on the right.	Consulta "Clavados" a la derecha.	New CB prompt, please review	Lee la información sobre "Clavados" que se encuentra a la derecha.	1. We prefer to say "Read the information to" "Lee la información sobre" instead "Consulta" because we hardly use that word. 2. We added the words "que se	NOT OK, not implemented	1 - See comment in row 7, changed. 2 - See comment in row 7, unchanged for now.	See row 7		As agreed by last emails. It would be: Usa la información de «Clavados» de la derecha.
Using the number keys, type your answer to the question.	Usando las teclas de números, digita tu respuesta a la pregunta.	New CB prompt, please review	Toca en el espacio en blanco para responder a la pregunta.	We prefer to say "Touch in the blank space to answer the question" "Toca en el espacio en blanco para responder a la pregunta" because if the student is not in the blank space, the keyboard doesn't appear.	NOT OK, not implemented	The proposed wording is not equivalent to source, and it also provides directions that are less specific and do not include any cues that a numeric response is needed. It is true that one needs to touch the	Agree with verifier comment. This will be made clear in Orientation units where the student will also be able to practise		We changed the word "Usando" to avoid repetition of the verb. We prefer: Con las teclas de los números, digita tu respuesta a la pregunta.

MAIN SURVEY VERIFICATION OF TEST UNITS

Before the Main Survey verification, some of the Field Trial items were dropped: 35 out of the 45 math items and 22 out of the 35 reading items were carried over to the Main Survey. No items were dropped from the Reading Components instrument. There was also a very small number of global revisions made in the source instruments between the Field Trial (FT) and Main Survey (MS), and for all versions in French, Spanish and English they were centrally implemented in the Main Survey units before they were made available to the NCs on the reviewing platform. For the Wolof version for Senegal, the NC was asked to provide the updates in the Main Survey Change Request Form to be implemented by the verifier during the verification step.

The Main Survey Change Request Form was customised for each country, and it included not only notes about the global FT-to-MS changes, but also change requests the country had made during MS preparation of the PISA-D Strand A counterpart of the item, so that the same changes could be reflected in the PISA-D Strand C items. Countries were then asked to:

- check that the global revisions (wording as well as layout/structure of files) had been correctly reflected in their national version
- confirm that changes made in a PISA-D Strand A item were applicable to the corresponding PISA-D Strand C item
- check if there were any other “known errors”, that is, errors spotted after the Field Trial instruments were finalised
- document any necessary change requests in the Change Request Form.

The verification of the Main Survey instruments consisted of verifying the changes that countries requested to their Field Trial instruments. In national versions that were also administered in PISA-D Strand A there was very little room for change beyond what had already been approved, or what was needed to match the updated MS source. For the Wolof version, there was more leeway and changes were accepted to correct any outright errors identified after the FT instrument had been finalised; however, preferential changes were not accepted. Verifiers centrally implemented those changes that were approved by the Consortium and the NC checked the correct implementation during Post-Verification Review. Figure 5.4 below shows an example of a change request inserted by the National Centre in the Change Request Form.

Figure 6.4 Sample of a documented change request in a Strand C Field Trial-to-Main Survey Change Request Form

Question stem FT	National Centre						Core A (ETS)	eApStAn
	ITEM ERROR and JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE	Location in the unit	ENG/FRA source wording	Original FT wording (full sentence(s) in local language)	English back-translation of original FT wording	Corrected MS wording (full sentence(s) in local language)	TEST DEVELOPER COMMENT	VERIFIER COMMENT
Which is the least expensive choice on the menu?	Change not made in the Strand-A French juice to «jugo natural». According to our context, fresh juice is a different drink. Juice is a fruit drink a little solid and the fresh is a liquid drink. By involuntary error it was not modified in the Strand-A.	Stimulus	Fresh Juice	Jugo fresco	Fresh Juice to Natural juice	Jugo natural	AK: I agree that it should not be changed. Fresh juice is still a DRINK (and is listed under the "Drinks" heading on the Menu). The difference between fresh or natural juice should not affect the respondent's understanding of the question.	Ver feels there is no strong enough reason to make this change: as long as the items under "drinks" are drinks, it should work in terms of item functioning. Unchanged.

FIELD TRIAL VERIFICATION OF CONTEXT QUESTIONNAIRES

At the beginning of the translation and verification process, the National Centres administering PISA-D Strand C in English, French or Spanish received a Questionnaire Adaptation Spreadsheet (QAS), in which either their own PISA-D Strand B items (for items transferred from PISA-D Strand B to PISA-D Strand C), or the source or reference translation (for items new to PISA-D Strand C) were prepopulated. The NC's task was to review the prepopulated translations, implement any updates that were needed to reflect changes made from PISA-D Strand B to PISA-D Strand C, and request changes in the new items if necessary to match their national context or language usage.

For the Wolof version, the NC was asked to provide a translation of the questionnaires in the QAS, using their own adapted French version as basis, and referring to the English master.

The completed Questionnaire Adaptation Spreadsheet (QAS) was then submitted for verification.

Figure 6.5 Sample of a Questionnaire Adaptation Spreadsheet (QAS) from PISA for Development Strand C Field Trial

ENGLISH SOURCE VERSION AND TRANSLATION AND ADAPTATION GUIDELINES			STEP 1 - DOCUMENTING ADAPTATIONS VS. SOURCE/BASE VERSION			STEP 2 - VERIFICATION		
<i>Pre-populated by Questionnaire Team</i>			<i>National Centre to complete</i>			<i>Verifier to complete</i>		
Int. Question Number	International English Version (Strand C)	ITEM-SPECIFIC TRANSLATION/ADAPTATION GUIDELINE	English translation of the proposed target version ONLY if adapted	Justification for proposed changes; National Centre comments	NATIONAL VERSION IN FULL (HONDURAS)	VERIFIER VERSION (if different from proposed national version)	Verifier intervention category	Verifier comments
	The next set of questions are about your father or those persons who are like a father to you, such as a guardian, step-father, or foster parent.	See guideline in row 513. Similar to Intro before ST026		Changed to formal language	El siguiente grupo de preguntas son acerca de su padre o aquellas personas que son como un padre para usted, como un tutor, padrastro o padre asignado temporalmente a cuidarte.	El siguiente grupo de preguntas son acerca de su padre o aquellas personas que son como un padre para usted, como un tutor, padrastro o padre asignado temporalmente a cuidarle.	Inconsistency	Change from informal to formal address not done in one occurrence. Changed.
	If you share your time with more than one set of parents or guardians, please answer the following questions for those parents or guardians you spend the most time with.	Same as Intro for "About your family and home"			Si comparte su tiempo con más de una pareja de padres o tutores, conteste las siguientes preguntas pensando en los padres o tutores con los que pasa más tiempo.			

For the only translated version (Wolof), the verifier’s brief was defined as checking whether target questionnaires were linguistically correct and faithful to the previously verified and approved French national version. With a view to this, the verifier was instructed to:

- check whether the English back translation of the agreed adaptation corresponded to the implemented adaptation in the national language
- check whether the agreed adaptation was correctly reflected in the questionnaire
- check the questionnaires for undocumented adaptations (deviations from the source not listed in the QAS) and report them
- check linguistic correctness (grammar, spelling, etc.) of the entire target version.

Verifier interventions were provided within the QAS, together with comments explaining the intervention. Once the verification was completed, the QAS was sent to The Learning Bar for further comments.

As for the test units, any significant further changes were labeled as “requires follow-up” by the Questionnaire team, and after negotiation with the country teams, their correct implementation was checked by verifiers during Final Check.

For the versions adapted from English or French sources, or the Spanish reference version, the verifiers’ brief was to:

- check that the changes made by the National Centre versus the reference version were linguistically correct and consistently and correctly implemented
- check that the agreed adaptations were correctly reflected in the questionnaire.

It was also part of the verifiers’ task to make sure that the errata were correctly addressed in the target questionnaires.

MAIN SURVEY VERIFICATION OF QUESTIONNAIRES

For the questionnaires there was no separate Change Request Form. Instead, the Field Trial QAS forms were reformatted prior to making them available to the National Centres: the order of items was changed to match the Main Survey source; items that were dropped after the Field Trial were removed; and Field Trial-to-Main Survey revisions were implemented in the “MS source” column, clearly marked and explained in the “MS source comments” column. The countries used this reformatted Main Survey QAS to request changes and to provide translations for the added and updated questions.

The verifiers’ brief was to check that the global revisions were correctly and consistently implemented and that the change requests made by the country were linguistically correct, in compliance with the general and item-specific guidelines and equivalent to the source. Any additional change requests beyond the global revisions were subject to the approval of the Questionnaire team at The Learning Bar.

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

In the administration of PISA-D Strand C much of the language work (translation and updates of translations) that in the main PISA study would have been the National Centres’ responsibility was completed centrally by the Consortium. This was possible because most of the participating countries administered the survey in Spanish, French or English. This made the process much easier for the National Centres, as well as ensured consistency and high quality of the translations across the national versions. For the only language version that was fully translated in Strand C (Wolof), the process was simplified to the greatest extent possible, so that the translation team did not need to learn to use new translation tools. This was an effective approach for this particular administration, but it would be difficult to apply the same approach if future administrations included more participating countries and particularly more countries with multiple unique languages. In such a scenario, the

National Centres would need to be given more responsibility, which also means they would require more training and support.

Despite the fact that for most countries the translation workload was non-existent, some of them had difficulties following the timeline. It also seemed that the person assigned to a given review task did not always receive the instructions provided by the Consortium; furthermore, the Consortium did not have direct contact with these reviewers, which led to cases of miscommunication and misunderstandings. In the future, it would be expedient to ask the NCs to nominate one person as the lead of the translation team, who would be responsible for all translation and adaptation related tasks and communicate directly with the Consortium.