

Guidelines for Developing Translations

Translation and Standardization Project Director

- The initial step in the development of translations of the Press's instruments is the identification of a Translation and Standardization Project Director, a researcher who will supervise the development of the translation and ultimately declare it final, and will supervise the collection of normative and clinical data. This person should be from the country or culture for which the translation is being developed and must be a credible authority in the area of personality assessment, diagnosis, and psychopathology, preferably a bilingual academic psychologist. He or she must be fluent in the target language and must be at least reasonably conversant with English. He or she should also be knowledgeable about the current English-language assessment literature and about issues and methods relating to translations of psychological tests.

Development of the Translation

- The translation should be developed by a team of translators (no fewer than two) fluent in the target language and in English, and knowledgeable about the English-language assessment literature and about issues and methods relating to the translation of psychological tests. It is recommended that the translators independently translate the items and then compare the results, negotiating differences in the translation of items to obtain the most equivalent item.

Development of a Back-Translation

- The translated items should then be back-translated into English by someone other than the translators to determine whether they are equivalent in meaning to the English original. The results of the back-translation should then be incorporated into the translation.

Conducting a Bilingual Test-Retest Study

- To evaluate the adequacy of the translation, the original English-language version and the translation should be administered to a minimum of 35 bilinguals who are fluent in both languages and familiar with both cultures. Each subject must take the test in both languages in two separate sessions. Their responses can then be used to examine scale score differences and discrepancies at the item level.

Evaluation by the Language Service Employed by the University of Minnesota

- The language service reviews the translation to determine whether each translated item is equivalent in meaning to the English-language original. In assessing equivalence, attention is paid to vocabulary, idiom, syntax, and tone. The review will also note any errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

The University sends the service's report to the translation team, with the requirement that they respond to every suggestion in the report, either accepting the suggested change or providing a reason for not doing so. After the suggestions in the language service's report have been incorporated into the translation, it should be submitted to the project director for final approval.

Collection of Normative and Clinical Data

- At a minimum, a normal sample of 250 men and 250 women demographically representative of the country of the target language should be collected, as well as a demographically representative clinical sample of 50 men and 50 women.

The US norms are to be used for comparative research purposes only. They are not to be included in published materials on translations.

Scales That May Require Adaptation

- It is often the case that in developing translations of the MMPI-2 and MMPI-A the validity indicators require adaptation from their original form in the English-language versions developed for use in the United States. For example, the translated item pairs comprising inconsistency scales VRIN (pairs similar or opposite in meaning) and TRIN (pairs opposite in meaning) need to be carefully checked to ensure that the meaning of the translated item pairs has remained either similar or opposite, just as they were in the original, and that the endorsement frequencies of the items in each pair have remained suitable for their intended use and scoring method as a VRIN or TRIN item pair. Also, endorsement frequencies for the items comprising F, the Infrequency Scale, should be checked to ensure that they meet the infrequency criterion established for the scale. As a result of the translation, modifications in the choice and/or scoring of items or item pairs may be indicated in some cases.

Prepublication Report

- A final report on Data Collection and Standardization of the Translation is to be submitted to the Press before approval for publication is granted.