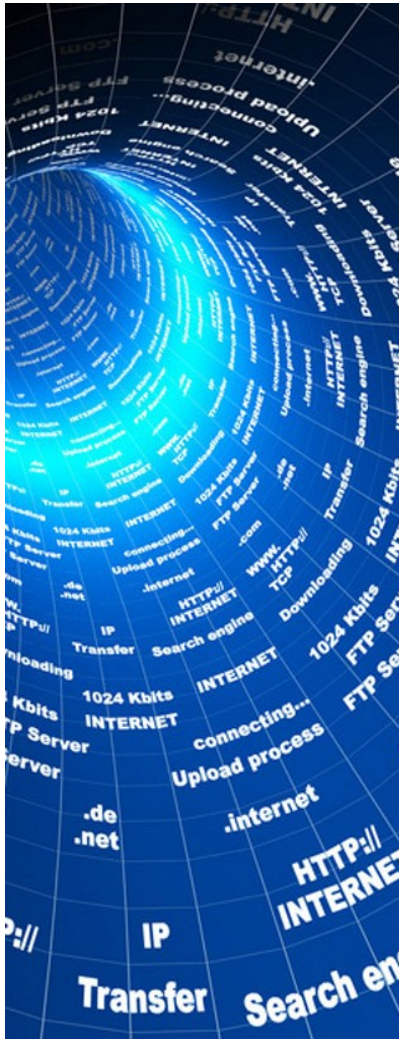




**ISO 18587 “Post-editing of  
machine translation output”-  
The challenge of a new revision**

# How did it come about?



- The beginning of MT dates back to 1954
- However, it was not until the beginning of the 21st century & especially from 2013, with the advent of NMT, that its use began to spread
- MT systems have become very popular –demand in MT PE services has increased due to
  - tight deadlines
  - tight budgets
  - high volume projects
  - repetitive contents
- The use of MT allows us to:
  - a) improve translation productivity;
  - b) improve turn-around times;
  - c) remain competitive

# How did it come about?



At the beginning of the 21st century, however, it was not clear:

- What the post-editing (PE) service should consist of
- What should and should not be corrected when dealing with a text translated by an MT engine
- What skills post-editors should have
- Differences between full and light PE
- When to apply full PE or light PE

# How did it come about?



- In 2009 at the annual GALA conference in Prague, an *ad hoc* working group, of which I was a member, was organized to discuss precisely these issues and the different levels of post-editing.
- In 2012, when I became a member of TC 174 (Spanish mirror committee for TC37/SC5 – Translation, interpreting and related technology), I submitted a formal proposal on this subject, as it had been explicitly excluded from the ISO 17100 translation standard.
- This new proposal for a working item was approved and launched at the annual ISO meeting in June 2013.
- The new standard was finally published in April 2017.



# What does this standard cover?



- ISO 18587:2017 sets out the requirements for the basic processes, resources and other aspects necessary for the provision of an MT output post-editing service that meets the applicable specifications (from the client, the TSP and any industry best practice)
- Regarding the process to be followed, the standard covers:
  - The objectives in the post-editing process
  - The requirements of post-editing MT output
  - The Post-editor's tasks
  - The final verification and delivery steps
  - Obtaining feedback – improvement of MT engines

# What does this standard cover?

Competences and qualifications of post-editors (practically the same as in ISO 17100)

- **Competences**

- Translation competence
- Linguistic and textual competence in the source language and the target language
- Competence in research, information acquisition and processing
- Cultural competence
- Technical competence
- Domain competence



# What does this standard cover?



## Qualifications

- degree in translation, linguistics or language studies or equivalent degree;
- degree in any other field and the equivalent of two years of full-time professional experience in translating or post-editing;
- the equivalent of five years of full-time professional experience in translating or post-editing

# What does this standard cover?



## Post-editors shall have:

- a general knowledge of MT technology and a basic understanding of common errors that MT systems make;
- a general knowledge of CAT tools;
- the knowledge and ability to establish whether editing MT output makes sense, in terms of time and effort estimation;
- the ability to follow the instructions received and the ability to focus on specific issues and make specific corrections.
- the ability to provide structured feedback on frequently recurring errors in the MT output, contributing to improvement of MT systems over time.



# What does this standard cover?

## Requirements of full post-editing:

- ensure that no information has been added or omitted;
- edit any inappropriate content;
- restructure sentences in the case of incorrect or unclear meaning;
- produce grammatically, syntactically and semantically correct target language content;
- adhere to client and/or domain terminology;
- apply spelling, punctuation and hyphenation rules;
- ensure that the style appropriate for the text type is used and that stylistic guidelines provided by the client are observed;
- apply formatting rules.

Note: The standard specifically refers to full PE, as it is understood that ISO standards should aim for the highest possible level of quality. Light PE is included in an annex.



# What does this standard cover?

## Annexes on:

- Post-editor training
- Light post-editing
- Pre-editing
- Client-TSP agreements and project specifications
- Automatic post-editing



# Revision of ISO 18587:2017

- After 5 years, there is always a poll to decide what to do with standards. There are three possibilities:
  - Confirm the standard
  - Revise / Amend
  - Withdraw
- Although the majority of countries voted in favour of confirming the standard, there was a recommendation from the chair of ISO TC37/SC5 to revise the standard so this is the decision that was finally taken.
- The revised standard should be published by November, 2025.



# Revision of ISO 18587:2017

## Now, what should we do with the revision of this standard?

- Apart from updating the content (much has happened since 2017), there are some voices which consider it should be included in the general Translation standard. Why was excluded from ISO 17100?
- Should we include revision as a compulsory step?
- How should we define the process when working in a mixed environment (CAT + MT)
- Should customers be always informed when we are using MT + PE?





**Questions**  
**?**