

The Quality of Mercy: A corpus-based analysis of the quality of volunteer translations for non-profit organizations (NPOs)

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ABSTRACT

This paper summarizes the results of a wider exploratory study consisting of a corpus-based quality evaluation of three sets of texts translated by volunteers for non-profit organizations (NPOs) and based on a purpose-built theoretical framework drawn from a number of sources. The central aim of this investigation, therefore, is to analyze the quality of a body of texts translated by volunteers attached to volunteer translation organizations (VTOs) and reach pertinent conclusions based on a purpose-built theoretical framework. In order to do this, the study also involved sourcing a parallel corpus consisting of three sets of target texts and their corresponding originals in another language. The study found that the quality of translations undertaken by volunteers for NPOs is generally poor, although there were also some examples of good work.

KEYWORDS: translation quality, quality of NPO translations, pro bono translations, volunteer translators, NPOs, professional translators.