

eLearning & Translation

**Tips for success when translating
your education and training content**



As businesses and organizations continue to move towards more remote functionality, training and communicating with employees and customers is more important than ever. For almost two decades, eLearning courses have been a way to train, inform, and teach efficiently and cost-effectively. But what happens when you need to communicate with an audience that speaks another language?

eLearning courses are one of the best mediums through which translated content can be consumed. Since a course can include visual, audio, and text elements, translated content has a significantly better chance of being understood and retained. In this eBook, we'll look at what it takes to translate an eLearning course successfully and how you can prepare for the process.

Why Should I Consider Building an eLearning Course?

Before looking at the intricacies of eLearning translation, knowing what a well-designed course can do for your organization is essential. Some of the primary benefits include:

Ease of Access

Have something you want to inform your audience about? After creating your content, you can simply send out a link, and your audience, whether it be students, employees, or customers, can view your program effortlessly, allowing you to reach many people easily.

Increased Engagement

By offering an eLearning course, you can further engage your audiences with new training, policy updates, safety precautions, and continuing education opportunities. Whether they are working remotely or not, the more you can communicate with your teams, the more engaged they will be.

Built-In Assessments

eLearning courses can include tests and quizzes if assessments are needed. It does not matter if those you need to train are remote or in the same building. By enhancing your training with eLearning, your audience can be trained on the same material at any time, and by providing tests and quizzes, you can make assessments and provide certifications if needed. Whether it is training employees on a new workflow or yearly ethics training for the entire company, eLearning will be your best bet.

Translation Ready

Professional eLearning software will allow you to export files to share with your translation provider so you can translate your course in one or dozens of languages. Some of the best programs to consider are:

- Articulate Storyline
- iSpring
- Articulate Rise 360
- dominKnow
- Lectora
- Adobe Captivate

A quality translation provider can help translate all aspects of your course, from on-screen text and graphics to narration and subtitles.





Important Questions to Ask Before Translating

Now that you've decided to translate your eLearning course, there are a few things to consider before kickoff. Choices made at the beginning of the project will have a significant impact on the timeline and budget. Ensuring your files are clean and well-prepared for translation will make your project run smoothly and efficiently.

Is the eLearning source content suitable for your target audience?

In translation, when we talk about "Source," we're referring to the original document and the language that will be your starting point for translation. "Target" refers to the language(s) that you will be translating into. Make sure that your source content will be relevant by thinking more broadly about your entire target audience. If it contains many cultural references that won't make sense to the target audience, it's important to address that before starting the translation process. Perhaps your course contains laws specific to one country. If you are localizing for several different countries, you may need to include different content for those locations.

If your content contains humor, that's a great way to engage your audience, but it may not work in all situations or with all types of content. Humor, in small doses, can help your audience remember your material and enjoy the eLearning experience. Just be careful that your humor does not offend or alienate anyone, and remember that not all humor will be appreciated or understood in other languages. Work with your translation provider to identify source issues that may not translate appropriately to the new target audience.

Does your eLearning course have audio? If so, will you want it narrated in the new language(s) or will you use subtitles?

A/V services can have a significant impact on your project budget - especially if you are designing your course to go into multiple languages and you require more than one voice actor. A good voice-over can greatly enhance your user experience, but if the budget doesn't allow for this solution speak with your provider about AI voice-over options or subtitling.

When creating your source audio, be sure to time your English audio at a relaxed, even pace. If your source is English and the narrator speaks quickly with few breaks, timing the translated narration will be difficult. More often than not, languages expand in translation, so if you haven't left enough space, narration will be difficult and costly. Include some pauses in your source narration to allow additional space if your translation is longer.

If you have audio, is it live-action?

Live-action generally refers to a person speaking on-screen. You have different recording options depending on the style and effect you would like to create.

Let's take the example of an on-camera interview. In this case you have the option to "dub" your narration or layer the narration. Dubbing is the complete replacement of the source narration with the translated, recorded narration. Another style to consider is a layered effect where the original speaker begins speaking and then fades giving way to the translated narration. Some audiences may prefer the authenticity that this style lends to this interview scenario.

Have you considered using an AI voice-over?

Another budget-friendly option is to utilize AI-generated voice-over for your course. There have been large advancements made recently with Artificial Intelligence, and the voice-over industry is no exception. English AI-generated audio has come a long way, along with AI text-to-speech options in a variety of other languages. Voice-over programs will vary in quality relating to dialect and pronunciation. Ask your translation provider for samples of AI voices in your course's target language(s).

If you have any stakeholders that also speak these languages be sure to include them in the evaluation process so that they can select the best voice to meet your target audiences' needs. Also, be sure to consider the content and the importance of vocal inflections. For instance, you may opt to choose a human narrator for your project if your content addresses sensitive subject matter.

If your course has narration, do you have an accurate script?

If you are using the closed captioning feature or if you have used AI to generate your transcript be sure to verify that the transcript matches the audio before submitting your project. An accurate script is essential for an eLearning project. If you already have a script, great! Just be sure to provide it when sending your project for translation. Depending on the type of project, the addition of time codes may be necessary.

Does your eLearning software support Right to Left (RTL) languages and special fonts or layouts?

If your course will need to be translated into any RTL languages like Arabic or Hebrew, verify language compatibility. Many current eLearning programs will support these languages, but older versions may not. Another consideration would be if any special fonts need to be used or if the software will support your language(s) properly.

For example, Thai has very specific rules for line breaks. If the software you are using doesn't support Thai, translation may still be possible, but it will be a more manual (and costly) project, which may require additional consideration during budget planning. If you have questions about language support and software compatibility, your translation provider will be able to help.



Does your eLearning course contain embedded text in graphics?

Any on-screen text can be included in a text layer within your eLearning course or embedded into graphics. Both versions of text can be translated, but embedded text will cost more. Why? eLearning software can export a translatable file (usually an Xliff or Word file) that will include all text in the text layer. However, it cannot export text embedded in a graphic. That text will need to be manually extracted by your translation provider. Once the translation is complete, it will then need to be manually placed back into the graphic file using Adobe Photoshop or a similar software.

When we talk about embedded text graphics, we're referring to graphics added to your eLearning project from another program (e.g., Adobe Illustrator) with text already incorporated. That text is actually part of an Illustrator file and not part of the text layer within your eLearning module. If the majority of your text is in embedded graphics, this will result in increased cost and add to the project timeline.

You can avoid this by incorporating plain, textless graphics into your eLearning project and by using the text tools within the eLearning software to incorporate text. The more you have in your text layer (as opposed to embedded graphics), the more cost-efficient your project will be.

Does your eLearning course have animations with audio or text?

Begin by determining if you would like to choose narration or add subtitles. If the animations contain onscreen text, additional formatting will be needed. Similar to embedded graphics created outside of the eLearning software, the formatting team will utilize the external software used to create the original animation to create the translated animations. If working with the software is not possible, the vendor can assist by recreating the animations.

Will the translations be going through an internal review?

If the translated content needs to be reviewed and approved by someone within your organization, discuss this during the project planning phase so that your vendor can integrate this step into your project schedule. Your translation provider will send you the translated content for the course and the narration script for review.

#	English (United States)	German (Germany)
1	Standards of Business Conduct (Our Code)	Verhaltenskodex für den Geschäftsverkehr (unser Kodex)
2	Our Values - Occupational Safety and Health	Unsere Werte – Gesundheit und Sicherheit am Arbeitsplatz
3	Every employee plays a critical role and has both a voice and responsibility in ensuring that they and their co-workers are not exposed to hazards in the workplace.	Jeder Mitarbeiter spielt eine wichtige Rolle und hat sowohl entsprechende Möglichkeiten als auch die Verantwortung zur Sicherstellung, dass die Mitarbeiter am Arbeitsplatz keinen Gefahren ausgesetzt sind.
4	Each employee has the right to report, without fear of retaliation, unsafe conditions to a supervisor, the environmental, health and safety representative or other designated person at the work location.	Jeder Mitarbeiter hat das Recht, sicherheitsgefährdende Bedingungen ohne Furcht vor Vergeltungsmaßnahmen einem Vorgesetzten, dem Beauftragten für Umwelt, Gesundheit und Sicherheit oder einer anderen benannten Person am Arbeitsort zu melden.
4-2	Furthermore, all employees are empowered to stop an operation or procedure they feel is unsafe.	Des Weiteren haben alle Mitarbeiter die Möglichkeit, einen Vorgang oder ein Verfahren zu stoppen, wenn dieses ihrer Meinung nach nicht sicher ist.

At Argo Translation, we provide our clients with bilingual Word files where the client reviewer can easily review the translated content, make changes, and add comments as necessary. Planning to streamline the review as part of your project will ensure that you avoid costly and time-consuming rework, such as manual formatting updates, and expensive rerecords.

How often will your source content need to be updated?

Using professional software like Articulate Storyline, Adobe Captivate, and Lectora will make updates a breeze. Those programs support easy replacements of small pieces of text, graphics and media. Some tools even allow you to track changes and create a review cycle if your team needs to weigh in. If your eLearning courses need to be updated often, it will be important to ensure the content is as clean as possible and that the workflow is efficient.

Keep in mind that it can get costly to make updates to live-action videos or narration so consider making those pieces ones that you will update less frequently. If you have material that will need to be updated frequently, consider making those pieces text or graphics. Minimize embedded text and consider using subtitles instead of voice-over if turnaround time or cost are concerns.

What is your timeline and budget?

Depending on the answer, your final product may look different than you envisioned. A good translation provider will help set your expectations surrounding the costs and timelines involved. If you have a limited budget or timeline, let your provider know. They can help you sort out which elements are most important to you, and they'll suggest the best workflow to get the most out of your budget.

Whether you have designed a simple course with basic text requirements or you have chosen to add lots of extra moving pieces, be sure to include your translation provider in the scheduling discussion early. Discussing timelines during your scoping phase will help ensure the published translated programs are as terrific as your source!



What does a typical eLearning translation workflow look like?

- 1 Voice-Over Selection**
Argo Translation will send samples of voices for the customer to choose from.
- 2 File Preparation**
Argo Translation exports translatable text and creates a translatable file for embedded graphics text. Additionally, transcription of any spoken text not provided by customer.
- 3 Translation**
Linguist translates in Translation Management System.
- 4 Editing**
Linguist edits in Translation Management System.
- 5 Client Review (optional)**
Client reviews 2-column MS Word file. Linguist reviews and implements client markups, and Argo Translation updates the translation memory.
- 6 Content Import & Voice-Over Recording**
Argo Translation imports translations into eLearning module and records audio (if applicable). Once voice-over is complete, audio files are imported.
- 7 Desktop Publishing**
Argo Translation handles formatting of translated slide content and synchronization of all eLearning elements in the translated module.
- 8 Functional Review**
Linguist reviews eLearning module as a user would and creates markups.
- 9 Implement Markups**
Argo Translation updates eLearning content and translation memory database.
- 10 Publishing**
Final eLearning content is published and delivered.

Putting It All Together

eLearning courses are an excellent tool for improving communication with employees, students, and customers and simplifying the process of communicating with audiences who speak different languages. Following these tips will help you build a successful course that can be transformed into a multilingual training staple and further cement your organization as a thought leader that takes providing knowledge to its audiences seriously.



To learn more about translating your eLearning course,
get in touch with the team from Argo Translation by visiting:

www.argotranslation.com

