Translating and standardizing metadata: a case study for French social sciences surveys

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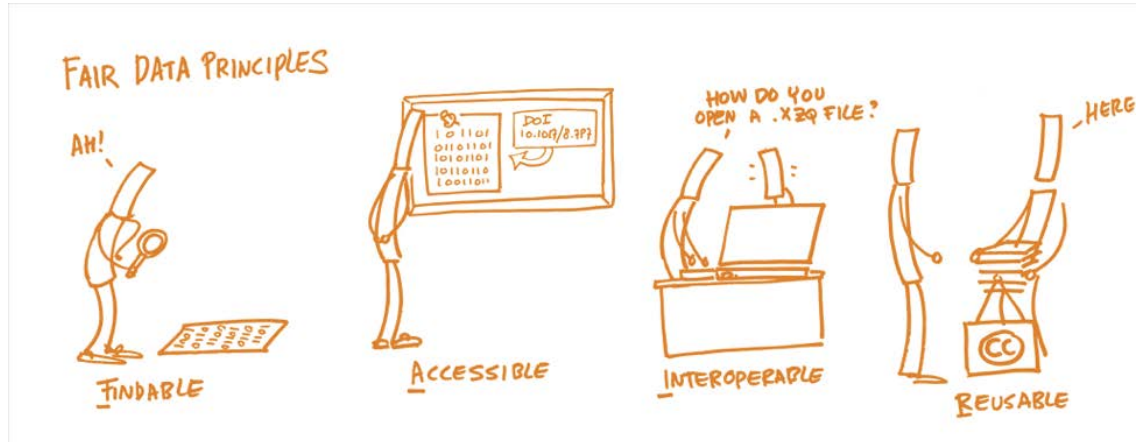
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❏ **Multilingualism** as a dimension of **data discoverability**
❏ Translation **challenges**: controlled vocabularies & cultural issues
❏ **Improving** our **practices**

FAIR data and metadata at the Center for Socio-Political Data (CDSP)

How **FAIR principles** should manifest in reality is **open to interpretation***

Consensus on the fact that the ultimate goal of metadata should be to optimize reuse of data

Need for data archives to adapt

Source: Mons, B. and Neylon, C. and Velterop, J. and Dumontier, M. and Da Silva Santos, L. and Wilkinson, M. 2017. Cloudy, increasingly FAIR; Revisiting the FAIR Data guiding principles for the European Open Science Cloud. Information Services and Use. 37 (1): pp. 49-56.

Why translate metadata?

of non French speaking data users at the CDSP
"Metadata translation is often sufficient to support a user's assessment whether an object is relevant or not."

Source: https://pro.europeana.eu/files/Europeana_Professional/Publications/BestPracticesForMultilingualAccess_whitepaper.pdf

What's special about metadata translation?

Translators of literature often have a great deal of linguistic and artistic freedom. The challenge of translating fiction usually lies in carrying the ambiguities of the source language over to the target language.

Translating technical and informative texts requires **clearer**, more **univocal interpretation**, although depending on the text type a translator may have some creative licence.

Source: https://tietoarkistoblogi.blogspot.com/2018/12/translation-and-international-data-use.html

What is a *good* (metadata) translation?

Language is built on **interpretations**

How to create a neutral translation?

Priority: relaying the idea of the original text clearly and intelligibly Can full equivalence be achieved?

Striving for <u>fidelity and clarity</u>

(Not) Controlled vocabularies

French:

Centre de recherches politiques de Sciences Po

CEVIPOF

Centre de recherches politiques de Sciences Po (CEVIPOF)

Centre d'études de la vie politique française

English:

Center of political researches of Sciences Po (CEVIPOF)

Importance of CVs!

Cultural expressions (1)

Source language:

"punaiset tuvat ja perunamaat"

Target language 1:

"red cottages and potato fields"

Target language 2:

"typical Finnish countryside"

Source: https://tietoarkistoblogi.blogspot.com/2018/12/translation-and-international-data-use.html

Cultural expressions (2)

Source language:

Municipales : le PS coulé par la vague bleue

Target language: "right-wing parties"

Errors in the original text

Ideal situation

In-house translator

And in real life?

Translation process at the CDSP

Professional translator

Proofreading

Review of the original source language version

Going back and standardizing and harmonising metadata. Using controlled vocabularies. The initial cost quickly amortised.

Conclusion

Should we translate variables metadata?

CESSDA Euro Question Bank (EQB)for inspiration.

Translating metadata allowed us to reasses them and improve our processes.