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Quality in Translation:
Planning and Assessing Museum Texts

Abstract

The article discusses aspects of translation quality (TQ) in museum communication to discuss professional and theoretical approaches to quality. TQ has been investigated from various perspectives by Chengzhi (2010), Leiva Rojo (2018), Gillot (2014) and, more recently, Manfredi (2021), among others, but it remains an issue for professionals in the field of museum communication. ISO standards, for example, focus on establishing and maintaining the process, review and approval of translations to facilitate communication at all levels. However, quality is not a mere organisational problem but a matter of language that impacts the text (terminology, cohesion) and museum discourse. Moreover, the use of multimodal materials with both a promotional function and an educational scope adds more complexity, profoundly affecting the cultural relevance of museum communication.

For this reason, more insight is needed to assess the impact of what museums produce and put online. I argue that TQ should be integral to exhibitions and multimodal materials planning. TQ can develop the communicative force of museums. Accessibility and the need to engage the public more extensively can also draw from standards in quality management. By connecting translation studies and museum studies, I will discuss models of translation quality based on interlingual, intertextual and intermedial comparisons to identify best practices.

1. *Museums, communication and translation*

In this article, I outline the complexities of museum communication in relation to quality management. From the point of view of discourse and genre analysis, I first discuss quality as a broad category of management and as a possible response to the changing settings of museums and heritage organisations.

Quality will be defined and discussed in section 2 by considering museum translation as a case study. Translation quality is a consolidated practice applied through ISO standards. On the basis of previous research, I argue that we can learn from translation quality to improve all forms of strategic communication planning. I suggest that quality can be realised through best practices in all aspects of communication management and should not be limited to specific areas.

In recent years, multimodal and transmedia practices have brought museum discourse beyond its traditional textual and linguistic environment. Visitors' engagement, co-creation, and virtual exhibition settings have highlighted the need to keep museum communication under control, thus questioning managerial and curatorial practices alike.

In fact, museums have only recently recognised strategies to address the new communication sceneries, and, in many cases, the focus is still on the 'content' rather than the 'medium'.

Considering the current situation in museum communication planning, different and competing forces shape the context and determine how languages, translation and multimedia tools can be used. In this perspective, the application of quality provides metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of communication and stimulate improvements.

Let me consider three issues that make museum communication demanding and that could be addressed by a quality-based approach.

Multilingualism is generally seen as a form of public engagement that creates a more direct connection with visitors. As testified by studies in visitors' engagement, monolingualism should be overcome for the benefit of institutions: rather than being a cost, the availability of multilingual texts creates a positive response from the public, which in turn generates a positive image of the museum and enhances accessibility (Silverman 2014; Drotner and Schroder 2014; Rizzo 2019). Museums either choose to communicate their activity to the public through English, English, plus the local language and, in many cases, by using other languages according to their potential target. Generally, texts are produced in the local language, and then some form of translation is introduced; more rarely, materials are produced directly in English. This situation points to the fact that monolingualism and multilingualism 'compete' as communication strategies and that the choice of one or the other perspective is often dictated by very practical needs such as funds availability or the curator's choice and personal sensitivity towards multiculturalism and the

intake of more creative forms of communication that can host diversity. In this perspective, quality can better adjust messages to the context, tailor content to the various types of visitors, and, as a consequence, refresh the overall communication scheme to facilitate activities of inclusion or the educational mission (Garibay and Yalowitz 2015; Liao 2018; Ayala, Cuenca-Amigo and Cuenca 2020; Bartolini 2020).

Another aspect that, at present, challenges the function of museum communication and translation is the debate over the decolonisation of exhibitions. The issue highlights the existence of ideological frictions regarding the relationship between western and non-western cultures – something that forefronts the importance of translation to avoid conflicts (Philips 2021).

Since Museums are meant to serve society and its developments, enhance knowledge and promote the enjoyment of heritage according to ICOM 2022 definition,[1] translation is also a crucial tool that facilitates this mission (Neather 2022).

In other words, the debate about how museums fostered colonial power compels curators to carefully plan the activities so that different and diverse points of view on history can be offered to visitors in a balanced way. Therefore, quality monitoring of visitors' response can aid curators in maximising communication strategies by adapting texts to specific cultural needs.

A third issue that continues to stimulate research about museum communication is the increased visibility provided by social media to large and small institutions alike. In particular, web communication represents a significant challenge for institutions that have coped with the post-pandemic. On the one hand, we have been urged to 'go back to normal'. On the other, the new 'habits' have increased the demand for resources and the accessibility of collections. For example, the social distancing measures and the lockdown scenario boosted forms of online socialisation that were already in place but

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1 This concept belonged to previous ICOM museum definitions and were reinforced in the 24th August 2022 statement which reads: "A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing." See https://icom.museum/en/news/icom-approves-a-new-museum-definition/.

considered somewhat 'impractical'. In particular, the use of more informal, user-centred messages on social media, such as podcasting and vlogging, has created the need for more engaging genres and a push towards the entertainment sphere rather than the educational one.[2] This has also enhanced a change in the idea of popularisation as the typical mission of museums, shifting towards a broader vision of co-construction of meaning with the public and the availability of copyright-free materials (Norris and Tisdale 2016; Peng and Lan 2021; Lema and Arnaboldi 2022; Hauptman 2022; Bayrou 2022).

The spread of textuality and the many actants involved in these new forms of communication must be monitored and assessed as part of overall quality management to optimise resources.

The three points discussed above indicate that museum communication extends beyond the walls of the institutions. In sum, the context and purpose of museum texts have changed. Museums communicate by creating texts that have a social and anthropological impact. Ongoing social changes tremendously broadened the scope of museum activity. Hence the need to find 'tools' that can improve communication management and guarantee the optimal form of texts over time. Quality, as best practice, can frame the communicative process by assessing compliance with standards, time schedules, cultural settings and all the demands of contemporary societies.

2. *Quality, standards and communication management*

In recent years museums accepted new modalities to share their mission, activities and events with a broader audience. The trend is to move towards multiple, participated, and less formal types of communication characterised by hybrid genres (Waern and Løvlie 2022, 31-49). Not only do museums produce texts and create hybrid genres, but they are multimodal

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2 A good example is @MarDixon, the brain behind such social media campaigns as #MuseumSelfie and #AskACurator. In the Italian context, one may consider *Le passeggiate del Direttore*, short-guided tours led by the director of the Egyptian Museum in Turin. See also https://icom.museum/en/news/reinventing-museum-communication/ and https://www.icom-italia.org/icom-voices-reinventing-museum-communication-agile-interparation-of-heritage/.

texts and produce a system of meaning. In this perspective, the creation of texts and their translation can be seen as a transfer of meaning either at the level of text-genre production or at the level of museums' social and cultural function in society (Ravelli 2007, 152; Neather 2005; Sturge 2014; Rosman and Rubel 2020).

For this reason, genre awareness has become an essential element of communication because it entails the recognition of communities and social groups with specific needs. Rather than considering visitors as a homogeneous group, museums target their activities on specific categories that need specific genres and communicative strategies. Communication must be equitable and organised both at the macro level (genres) and at the micro-textual level to provide a positive image of the institution or, for example, avoid ambiguities and bias, especially in the case of informal social media-based communication (Marini and Agostino 2021).

One way to face this new scenario is to place museum undertakings in 'broad regulation' forms.

2.1 *Standards, genres and management*

Treated as part of the overall activity of a museum, the production of texts may be subject to the same forms of organisation and governance that characterise project management in any other field. In other words, goals such as 'quality control' and 'standards' can be applied to museum operations to spot weaknesses and define strategies to maximise the institution's activities. Quality is thus the application of standards or formulae that describe "the best way of doing something" or "the distilled wisdom of people with expertise in their subject matter and who know the needs of the organisations they represent – people such as manufacturers, sellers, buyers, customers, trade associations, users or regulators".[3] Being compelled to face new needs, museums may resort to quality to redefine their activity. In this perspective, quality refers to the application of organisational best practices (quality assurance in the general management of the institution) and best practices in curatorship (quality planning, quality control and possibly evaluation of

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3 See https://www.iso.org/standards.html.

exhibitions and events) so that museums may find their style and unique voice (Falk 2016; Půček, Ochran, and Plaček 2021; Valtysson 2022).[4]

Industrial quality standards have been applied to diverse domains ranging from health and safety to energy, environment and IT security and are the source of normative applied to many different contexts. For example, the ISO 9000:2000 family of standards represents a multi-level set of frameworks providing guidelines and requirements to guarantee quality in industrial and governmental environments. The ISO standards were devised in the 1980s and have been constantly updated. These standards set out the requirements for implementing shared levels of contractual, business and corporate process and management purposes. Realising the standards involves documenting how the final output is created by determining roles, production and delivery timing. The norms extend project management procedures to be applied to a single type of product or to a whole sector to foster continuous improvement, corrective actions, and overall customer satisfaction in real terms.[5]

Aimed at protecting consumers or avoiding fraud and malpractice, standard regulations represent an opportunity for improvement, although, in small contexts, they are often seen as time-consuming practices requiring paperwork, accountability, and performance. These practices have only recently and partially fit into the non-profit organisational management of public institutions and are an 'imperfect' scenario that needs to be discussed. The effort and the novelty required are often resented as the application of standards may be too complex, and the results can only be seen from a long-term perspective. Critics see them as a global business. In fact, managerial practices may be objected to in political terms as an outdated neo-capitalist view of the arts (Sholette 2017; Fraser and Jaeggi 2018; Child 2019). Moreover, accepting quality implies adopting standardisation at the level of text planning which may affect the conceptualisation of meaning around the exhibits.

Bearing these limitations and criticism in mind, we prefer to consider the positive aspects of quality management as a benchmark for improvements: in

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4 An identifiable communicative 'style' has become a distinctive element for many institutions. An interesting example is represented by MARTA, Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Taranto, which will be considered later on in the article, and GAM, Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Turin, and the use of humour on social media such as Instagram and Twitter.

5 See https://www.iso.org/standards.html.

all the possible applications, quality can monitor the process of text production, the impact that the text structure has on the effectiveness of communication, and set the roadmap so that time, priority and issues may be identified before the final product is released to the public.

Museums, though, use specific standards to measure their overall management. In the Italian context, for example, museums are public service providers and, in this perspective, accept the ICOM Code of Ethics and apply the Art. 114, c.1, D. Lgs. n°42/2004 to set the organisational standards and create networks of institutions and regional governments to standardise the quality of service.[6]

The ICOM Code establishes standards to foster the complete application of the museum's mission. Another goal is to disseminate a shared culture of professional ethics that, beyond national and local differences, is accepted by the management of a museum. For this reason, the code can be an essential reference not only to identify areas of application of the standards but also to base their definition on a system of negotiations involving all levels and stakeholders at national, regional and local levels. This approach, broader in scope, can overcome opposition to quality intake.[7]

2.2 Standards in museum texts and translation

ISO 9000, its derivatives, and the European translation quality standard EN 15038 are well-known among translation professionals. In the context of museum management, ISO 21246:2019 defines a set of areas where quality can be applied to the museum and represent another approach that involves communication in a more specific way.[8]

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6 See http://musei.beniculturali.it/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Allegato_I-Livelli-uniformi-di-qualit%C3%A0-per-i-musei_English.pdf.

7 See http://musei.beniculturali.it/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Allegato_I-Livelli-uniformi-di-qualit%C3%A0-per-i-musei_English.pdf.

8 The areas that are regulated by the norms are basically the strategic planning and internal management of museums, which comprise also the internal communication to investors and stakeholders (e.g. funding). In this perspective, the monitoring and control of learning, research, conservation, social and economic life, along with the collection of data to assess the overall activity over time are the core aspects of quality control. See https://www.iso.org/standard/70231.html.

As for translation, in particular, quality defines how the translator creates the product by defining steps that will turn the source text into the translated text, and it describes the relationship between the translator and the client. In other words, quality sets the goal and context of the translation process and impacts the translated text by defining the translators' choices, the integration and adjustment to a different medium, and it sets the conditions for the final delivery (fig. 1).

In general, quality can be realised by procedural and contextual constraints that guide and organise the work of the text producer and place the texts into an ideal context. The boundaries can be implicit or explicitly accepted by clients, text writers and translators as general aims, guidelines, procedures and diverse forms of assessment applied during the whole process of assembling the final text. The ST is prepared, and the TT is then optimised. From this point of view, quality recognises a balance of needs and expectations among the subjects involved in the communicative process, such as the context in which the text can be used and re-used, the register and style, duration of the final output, time constraints, costs, and users' expectations.
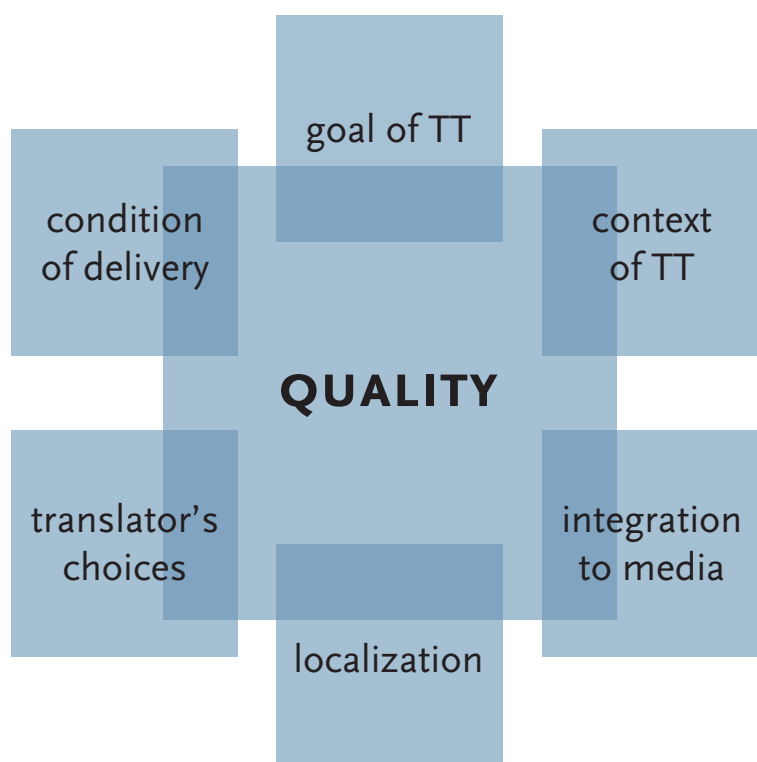

Fig. 1. Aspects of translation that can be influenced by quality management

The table below (Table 1) describes the levels to which quality can be applied. It is worth mentioning that we are dealing with external communication, i.e. directed to the public. Quality management is applied at the level of the medium (Museum Texts) and works with all types of translation. The more complex the text, or in the case of translation, the more distant from the source text, the more the text's creation needs to be controlled.

Proposals to conceptualise quality evaluation and its application to text organisation depend on the underlying theoretical background adopted and, most of all, on the objectives: communicative-oriented ones use a more dynamic approach to assessing the effect on the readers and better apply it to a general understanding of textuality. In contrast, there are approaches tending to base quality judgments on the equivalence between the source text and the translated text (Armstrong 2005; Reiss and Vermeer, 2014; Rundle 2022).

AREAS OF APPLICATION OF QUALITY CONTROL				
External Communication management				AREAS OF APPLICATION OF QUALITY CONTROL
Museum texts				
textual hybridity	integration of different genres, text forms, multimedia objects	hypertextual dimension	standardisation vs creativity in texts	
Translation				
approach	medium	meaning	distance from ST	
interlingual	language	textual dimension	minimum	
intertextual	genres	discursive dimension	variable	
intermedial	sounds, images, objects/ audio, video, tactile output	multimodal dimension	high	

Table 1. Areas of application of quality control

Exact equivalence or error identification as quality entails the translation process as a faithful reproduction of something initially produced in another language, thus defining the relationship between the ST and the TT as avoidance of mistakes.

However, this approach measures adherence to a standard language. It focuses on form rather than meaning, i.e. it focuses on the micro-textual or lexico-grammatical level, whereas issues may occur at higher textual levels, such as communicative, pragmatic or superstructural ones, which are crucial in the context of museum communication (House 2015; Robert and Remael 2016; Miltakienė 2021).

Textual and pragmatic approaches provide another point of view to TQ, shifting the focus from exclusively identifying and counting errors to incorporating textual, functional and communicative aspects. These approaches take complete texts and their functions as the main criteria for evaluation, proceeding later to error identification within the global framework of the text.

According to Dunne (2011), there are three critical aspects of quality that forefront the centrality of the visitors: the definition of parameters, the identification of requirements and the distinction between 'customer satisfaction' and compliance with requirements. In this perspective, quality requirements link to the context in which a translation project takes place and depend on the specific objectives for which a project was initiated. Therefore, quality is customer-centred. Given that the ISO standard focuses on customer satisfaction, quality also impacts notions of public engagement and inclusiveness and more generally, it impacts curatorial stance and the interpretation of the exhibits offered to the public (Manfredi 2021; Simone, Cerquetti and La Sala 2021).

A different point of view is provided by Chengzhi (2010), who develops Ravelli's discursive interpretation of museum communication (2007), which connects the physical level of the museum, i.e. the architecture (lights, building, pathways) and Halliday's framework. To Chenghzi, quality consists of the text's effectiveness as an independent entity. Informativity, acceptability, and intertextuality are vital in determining quality.

From a different perspective, Guillot (2014) compares French and English labels and evaluates points of view, style, and lexical choices in qualitative terms. Both the thematic structure and the information flow are examined, and they appear to be composite and implicit in the French labels that are dense in both content and form (lexical) as required by the French genre and context conventions. The result of the investigation highlights that translation entails a different stance on audience

engagement: the English text (TT) resorts to a plain style more appropriate for a non-specialised audience, while the French (ST) comments on the work of art, judges, and stimulates the engagement of a more expert visitor. In this case, TQ enacts different discursive practices which point to the 'mobility' of the notion of quality that must respect TT conventions and readers' expectations.

Leiva Rojo (2018) uses a parallel corpus-based methodology to investigate phraseological competence. In his perspective, terminology, grammar, typography, punctuation, orthography, style, register and coherence are privileged quality aspects, while phraseology is not evaluated. This points to the fact that there exists a museum language (phraseology) that may not be defined as terminology (one-to-one correspondence word-meaning) but is distinctive of museum genres. In Leiva Rojo's view, one should discriminate and contextualise the function of museum-specific language before assessing equivalence, as it cannot be separated from the textual dimension.[9] However, the texts examined were published between 1999 and 2016, so the availability of electronic tools and translation methodologies were undoubtedly different.

The availability of ICT tools significantly impacts quality in terms of accuracy and speed of the monitoring process. There is a moment 'before' and 'after' the introduction of advanced ICT tools. This aspect must be considered a pivot in the construction of texts, communication requirements and hence translation. Indeed, research highlights several mistakes that point out problems in translation that may depend on the methodology. In the volume *Translation Quality Assessment* (2018), for example, the authors discuss the use of metrics in relation to both human and machine translation, and the models presented address the critical aspects of quality: adequacy and fluency, readability and comprehensibility, acceptability of the result and the potentials of automated quality assessment. What they highlight is precisely the growth and potential of the technology that in future may provide more support to human quality assessment and even, in some cases, substitute it entirely, but most of all, they highlight the need to tailor the process according to the context and the subjects involved, which links to the principles discussed above.

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9 Nevertheless, the texts that constitute the corpus do not distinguish between internal and external communication, nor in terms of function "Three of them provided information about activities, three gave information about exhibitions, four were press releases, and four others were educational material" (Leiva Rojo 2018, 13).

Therefore, the idea that the absence of mistakes determines text quality does not suffice nor fits the complexity of the process, as it focuses merely on the micro-level of textual accuracy (content, cohesion, lexical choices). Given the complexity of museum texts, we need to integrate another perspective into the notion of quality. It will be discussed in the following paragraph.

3. *Quality from the interlingual, intertextual and intermedial point of view*

Nowadays, museum translation and its discursive implications are set in a multimodal context and need a holistic theoretical approach (Liao 2018). Museum texts are hybrid: the website usually contains many types of texts and genres, and each section contains images and links to multimedia items. Hybridity entails complexity, and the hypertextual nature of a museum website forefronts the need for monitoring clusters of intersected texts (Kidd 2016, ch. 7).[10]

Examples of hybridity can be seen in many museums. Let me consider instances from Marta (Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Taranto) as a case in point.

As for intertextuality, the museum website, which is available in seven languages, displays samples of a short and essential catalogue to prepare the visit so that curiosity can be stimulated beforehand or, as a way to compact a focused visit for an expert visitor interested in some specimen only.[11]

There is a section of the area *Itineraries and collections* of the websites that, along with some 'traditional' descriptive pages, displays dynamic tiles, i.e. virtual panels containing essential data, an image and an interpretation of the object. The genre (a catalogue) is thus reorganised for a specific purpose (preparing the visit) using a more handy format (descriptive/informative

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10 In this case, the application of quality management can avoid, for example, textual 'codemixing'. In fact, it is not uncommon to find websites with some parts (phrases, sentences, or portions of texts) in the original language. This suggests the use of machine translation with 'reduced' manual editing or the translation of a set of selected texts only. Funds and the need to maximise resources are probably the reason behind this, although the phenomenon can be described as resistance to translation as part of cultural 'habits' (Liao 2018; Glynn 2021).

Examples can be found in diverse websites from Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan, https:// pinacotecabrera.org/en/ to Museo Nazionale della Montagna CAI, Turin, https://www. museomontagna.org/en/events/mountain-scenarios/.

11 See https://museotaranto.beniculturali.it/en/itineraries-and-collections/objects-on-display/.

micro-panel). In particular, the sub-section *Objects on Display* presents a selection of exhibits unique to the museum, such as the golden jewels, the nutcracker in bronze and gold foil, a coloured female head and an exquisite mosaic flooring along with prehistoric female figurines, among others.

The Italian ST generally prefers terminology, an impersonal form, a formal register, and a complex syntax. The English translations opt for a plain style that seeks an explicit description but, in some cases, keep the long and complex syntax of the ST with extraposition and clefting. This suggests that the focus is on ST and textual accuracy. A more holistic approach might have considered mediation in the form of glossing and a more direct rendering of syntax, which may facilitate understanding the description, whatever the cultural background of the reader.

In the example below, the underlined words in the English version indicate points that translate word for word the ST: shorter sentences and more appropriate vocabulary would have been preferable for a more native-like rendering of the text. Quality revision could thus rewrite the text to improve readability.

Testa femminile in terracotta – Taranto | IV sec. a.C.
Realizzata a matrice, la testa di donna è diventata il volto del MArTA. Ha l'acconciatura impreziosita da un diadema, tipico elemento della gioielleria femminile nel mondo greco, e stupisce per la bellezza dei tratti, enfatizzati dai resti di colore e, un tempo, da preziosi orecchini. Si tratta probabilmente di quanto si è conservato di una statua funeraria fittile, che rappresentava la defunta eroizzata, alla quale il diadema conferiva uno status di particolare rilievo.

Female head in polychrome terracotta – Taranto | 4th century BC.
Produced from a mold, the woman's head has become the symbol of the MArTA. She has a headdress embellished by a tiara, a typical element of female jewellery in the Greek world, and is amazing for the beauty of her features, emphasised by the traces of colour and, at one time, by precious earrings. This is probably what has been preserved of a fictile funerary statue, portraying the deceased as a heroine, to whom the tiara conferred a status of outstanding importance.

As for the intermedial perspective, Marta has a rich catalogue of events to explore new formats. In this case, a more 'quality-aware' approach seems on display. For example, visitors can watch a series of ten shorts entitled *MitoMania – storie ritrovate di uomini ed eroi* on the museum's YouTube channel.[12]

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12 See https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLEwHMugBYsyDNIRTJUIhb6IxdjqUyEH-S.

The series is dedicated to some vases returned to Italy in the early 2000s by various international museums as investigations ascertained their provenance from clandestine excavations in the Apulian territory. The one-minute videos divide the screen into two parallel sections, one with the vase seen from two sides and the other with a short script that is, in fact, a label as it would appear on a wall with the typical basic descriptive information, i.e. description of the scene, provenance, size and date. The colours of the fonts match the typical brownish, and black colours of the vases, the graphic development of the museum logo adds movement to the scrolling and swiping of the sections on-screen, and jazz music contributes to the dynamism of the presentation. No voice-over is available. The script language keeps the same formal technical tone mentioned above, and the translation generally prefers a plain style. Given the constraints of the video format, embedded forms are levelled in the English TT, and common core vocabulary is used instead of terminology or high register lexicon, while the meaning is, made explicit, as observed in the examples below. Syntax, in particular, is reorganised to comply with the English patterns, e.g. the subject is always mentioned.[13]

Il cratere raffigura, sul lato principale, un giovane a cavallo che affronta un guerriero appiedato, barbato e di aspetto maturo. Secondo un'interpretazione si tratterebbe dell'agguato di Achille a Troilo, il più giovane dei figli del re troiano Priamo.

The main face of the krater features a young man on horse back confronting a bearded, more mature, warrior on foot. According to one interpretation, this is Achilles' ambush of Troilus, the youngest son of the Trojan King Priam.

Sul lato secondario è raffigurata una scena di conversazione fra tre giovani ammantati.

On the secondary face, there is a scene of conversation amongst three cloaked young people.

Sul lato principale sono raffigurati, all'interno del loro palazzo, i signori dell'Oltretomba Ade e Persefone, seduti su una kline con le insegne della loro autorità.

The principal face shows the lords of the Underworld, Hades and Persephone, seated on a kline (couch) in their palace, with the symbols of their authority.

Intorno al palazzo, alcuni celebri "abitanti" dell'Oltretomba e divinità. Sul lato sinistro, in alto, Hermes Psicopompo che tiene il cadsuceo nella mano destra e un'hydra nella sinistra. In basso Hekate, con una torcia in ciascuna mano e una pelle di pantera sulle spalle.

Around the palace, we see several famous "inhabitants" of the Underworld and divinities. On the upper left side we see Hermes Psychopompos, holding the caduceus in his right hand and a hydra in his left. Below him we see Herkate, with a torch in each hand and a panther skin on her shoulders.

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13 See https://youtu.be/fybajUI6Zds and https://youtu.be/ymGbjwKMmkE.

The same museum developed animated reels on Instagram, which are hybrid texts. Objects are reinterpreted with the addition of both traditional and contemporary music as a contrast to surprise the viewer. The past and the present are connected in a new format. In this way, a II BC terracotta figurine of a dancer sings the famous song, *Mamma*, for Mother's Day, holding a modern microphone on a glimmering stage while another statue claps her hands surrounded by a cluster of red hearts. Other reels explain homosexual love in Diana Ross's I am coming out song, while others are dedicated to traditional marriage feasts and celebrations. In other cases, the addition of movements animates characters doing yoga or their fitness routine. The idea is to bring them alive, actualise the objects on display, and find a niche for the museum on social media, bypassing language and resorting to more universal iconic forms of communication. Creativity and humour result from this type of transmediation (MacLeod et al., 2018; Kapsaskis 2018; Du 2020; Basaraba 2022).

A public museum can thus embrace innovation and best practices in communication, as visitor engagement is crucial for all kinds of institutions. In the case of translation, which is a form of engagement, we see that understanding the complexities of textuality, genres, and discourse is a much-needed skill that may benefit from the application of quality. In other words, the design or audit of the text production and translation needs to be 'holistic 'and integrated with the museum narrative, i.e. its specific identity.

We can define quality in terms of control, planning, and awareness of visitors' needs. This general responsiveness to novelty designs the 'character' of the museum and keeps it consistent with the needs of the public. The public as a social group is identified and evaluated in the feedback provided to communication strategies, and this is also a realisation of quality (Lommel et al. 2014; O'Brien 2012; Drugan 2013; Gouadec 2010). The Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Taranto shows that state-run institutions can lead to innovation even if there may be aspects that need improvement. Quality standards set the target and hence highlight the need for constant optimisation, as mentioned at the beginning of the article.

In the case of multimodal texts, the application of translation quality needs to distinguish the various components of the text but also suggest the benefit of quality to monitor the various phases within a project life cycle, to keep the

exhibits constantly updated and appealing to the public. A quality matrix could maintain the projects, which is cost and time-saving (Sulit 2017; Mann 2019).[14]

To conclude, I summarise the points in text management to be monitored from a quality perspective. Table 2 below indicates aspects to be controlled periodically, thus realising the approach discussed above:

QUALITY MATRIX	Textual level
LANGUAGE/LOCALISATION	Definition of the appropriate language variety if needed (e.g. British English, American English spelling)
GENRE	Identification of the genre: i.e. label, panel, audio guide or audio description, video, social media message etc.
TARGET AUDIENCE	Identification of the target audience as this determines levels of formality, specialisation
SUBJECT FIELD	Identification of the subject, i.e. contemporary art and its subfields, antiquities, crafts, immaterial heritage etc., which determines the presence of terminology
PURPOSE	Engagement, entertainment, information
REGISTER	General, formal-technical, and friendly in the context of social media communication
ACCURACY	Focus on meaning and the extent of precise definition of meaning and equivalence in the case of translation (complete or partial translation, summary)
OUTPUT (MULTI)MODALITY	Evaluation of the embedding of the test in a multimodal context (script for a video, integration of images and hyperlinks)
FILE FORMAT AND LAYOUT	File format, limits of characters, fonts to be used, image resolution, colour palette, length, markup, punctuation
PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY/ USE OF MACHINE TRANSLATION	Strategy to use and integrate machine translation/ CAT tools/ terminology database

Table 2. Quality checklist

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14 On social media channels or the institutions' websites, there may be videos, files etc., that have not been updated. Sometimes they are still valuable and effective. Sometimes the technology could be updated, and generally, the overall style in which the content is provided looks obsolete. Indeed, in project management, a project ends when it is delivered, and the 'maintenance' or update of the products is considered another project altogether. However, an 'agile' application of the text 'life cycle' provides permanent feedback that fits perfectly into the visitors' engagement practices. In other words, a recurrent revision of a single aspect of the texts and its positioning within the museum communication strategies may seem time consuming but it extends the 'life cycle' of the texts and is another way to apply quality as best practice.

The proposal above addresses the core structure of museum texts and hence can be the focus of quality management, bypassing the formalities of more structured standards.

The notion of text-as-process that derives from applying an agile quality monitoring of communication entails meaning as plural, assigning agency to the reader, and extending the scope of translation beyond the text-as-product formal and linguistic features. It also points to multiple text interpretations that can be enacted in time.

4. *Conclusion*

Museums translate to enhance the engagement of their visitors. The availability of multilingual material is an essential tool to open collections to a diverse public. Museum translation comprehends several layers of meaning. In the broadest sense, a museum exhibition is a cultural translation transmuting epochs, media, objects, and ideas (Bal 2011; Sturge 2007; Katan 2009; Guillot 2014). In this perspective, translation creates culture. The procedure can be embedded in any mode of communication even though it does not appear as such.[15]

In the professional context, though, translation is often understood as mere 'equivalence' without 'grammar mistakes', and its creative potential is often neglected (Bayer-Hohenwarter and Kußmaul 2021, 310-325). The notion of quality that can be derived from the field of translation can be used to monitor all museum communication. In particular, it may serve to control, assess and optimise the new trends and the new needs of museum communication.

As mentioned above, the concept of creative industries has neoliberal connotations. Nevertheless, the application of project management to art organisations is a matter of fact. Profit and non-profit organisations are labelled as creative industries. The term 'industry' refers to the managerial aspect of organising the availability of the arts to the public, which is a culture-economy relationship. Indeed, the notion is constantly evolving to consider quality improvements as part of a process, i.e. an agile system of planning, editing, reviewing and improving museum texts (Schwarz 2014).

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15 An example is represented by machine translation incorporated in a Google search, see https://developers.google.com/search/docs/advanced/appearance/translated-results.

From this point of view, quality affects all the project stages: from the outset through commissioning, preparing, delivering and finalising, and not just the creative/ participatory phase (Matarasso 2013). A shared understanding of the project cycle is thus essential to artists, curators, funders and all the stakeholders who may have diverse expectations and views of what matters and is relevant. Only if all parties know what they are aiming for in the look, feel, and experience of an exhibition can the requisite quality conditions be 'designed'. This requires an enhanced culture of dialogic partnership (Blanche 2014, 12).

Finally, does the quality matrix interfere with creativeness? No, it doesn't, since quality shapes the container, the 'box' in which the exhibit is framed. Quality is the constant updating and tailoring of a project, and it can host creativity allowing museums to renew their work.

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