CONCEPT

Legal Translation Arabic-English: Contracts, Legislation and Machine Translation Post-Editing



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Introduction:

Legal translation errors between Arabic and English rarely look dramatic on the page, yet a shifted condition, an inconsistent defined term or an unchecked machine output can change who must do what and when. This Core Concept course builds a repeatable legal translation workflow for contracts, legislation and official documents, from source analysis and terminology equivalence to termbases, machine translation post-editing and structured revision. Participants work on authentic document types and leave with a Legal Translation Quality Pack: a bilingual termbase, a house style sheet and a quality assurance checklist.

Course Objectives:

- Analyse a legal source text for its legal system, function and status as an authentic or convenience translation before translating it
- Select full, partial or descriptive equivalents for legal terms that have no direct counterpart in the other legal system
- Translate contract clauses, defined terms, contractual duties and conditions between Arabic and English without altering their legal effect
- Translate articles of legislation, regulations and official documents while preserving numbering, cross-references and register
- Post-edit machine translation and large language model output of legal text to a full human post-editing standard
- Run a documented revision and quality check using an error typology, a termbase and a confidentiality routine

Target Audience:

- Translators responsible for rendering contracts, regulations and official papers between Arabic and English
- Legal staff responsible for checking bilingual versions of agreements and filings before signature or submission
- Government and corporate language units responsible for translating circulars, decisions and official correspondence
- Revisers and reviewers responsible for second-person checking of translated legal documents
- Terminology and localisation staff responsible for glossaries, termbases and translation memories

Course Outline:

Day 1: Legal Translation Foundations and Legal Systems

- Legal Translation Scope Map: Authentic Texts Versus Convenience Translations
- Literal, Functional and Communicative Approaches Applied to Legal Source Texts
- Legal Systems Comparison Grid: Civil Law, Common Law and Islamic Law Concepts
- Terminology Equivalence Scale: Full, Partial and Zero Equivalents
- Translator Self-Assessment Against a Legal Text Difficulty Matrix

Day 2: Translation Standards, Workflow and Terminology Management

- ISO 17100 Translation Workflow: Translation, Check, Revision and Final Verification
- Translation Brief and Client Specification Sheet for Legal Assignments
- Bilingual Glossary Entry Design: Term, Definition, Context and Source
- Termbase Build in a CAT Tool: Fields, Status and Forbidden Terms
- Translation Memory Alignment of Previously Translated Agreements

Day 3: Translating Contracts, Legislation and Official Documents

- Contract Translation Method: Recitals, Operative Clauses and Schedules
- Defined Terms Consistency Log Across Arabic and English Versions
- Rendering Contractual Duties, Permissions and Conditions Without Shifting Legal Effect
- Legislation and Regulation Translation: Articles, Paragraphs and Cross-References
- Court Judgments, Powers of Attorney and Notarial Deeds at Overview

Day 4: Register, Machine Translation, Quality Assurance and Ethics

- Arabic-English Register, Sentence Length and Punctuation Conversion Rules
- Machine Translation and Large Language Model Output: Risk Screening for Legal Text
- ISO 18587 Full Post-Editing Procedure and Post-Editor Competences
- MQM Error Typology: Accuracy, Fluency, Terminology and Style With Severity Levels
- Confidentiality Controls, Data Handling in Online Tools and Translator Ethics Code

Day 5: Legal Translation Case Lab and Quality Pack

- Services Agreement Case: Translating and Revising a Clause Extract
- Regulation Case: Translating a Set of Articles With Internal Cross-References
- Post-Editing Case: Correcting Machine-Translated Notarial Text Against the Termbase
- Peer Revision Round Scored With an MQM-Based Scorecard
- Legal Translation Quality Pack Assembly: Termbase, Style Sheet and QA Checklist

Skills You Will Gain:

- Legal Source Text Analysis
- Legal Terminology Equivalence
- Contract Translation
- Legislative Text Translation
- Termbase Management
- Machine Translation Post-Editing
- Translation Revision and Error Scoring
- Translator Confidentiality Practice

Why Attend This Course:

- Return with a Legal Translation Quality Pack: a bilingual termbase, a house style sheet and a QA checklist ready for your next assignment
- Use machine translation and large language models on legal text with a defined post-editing procedure instead of ad hoc correction
- Catch inconsistent defined terms, shifted conditions and broken cross-references before a translated document is signed or filed
- Compare translation practice with translators, legal staff and language units from law firms, public bodies, banks and energy companies

Conclusion:

Reliable legal translation between Arabic and English depends on a controlled process, not on fluency alone. The one week move from legal systems and terminology equivalence, through translation standards, termbases and translation memories, to translating contracts, legislation and official documents, and then to register, machine translation post-editing, error-based quality checks and confidentiality. The final day applies this workflow in a case lab and closes with a Legal Translation Quality Pack that participants reuse across their legal translation work.