

**TRANSLATION IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE BETWEEN
THE CANARY ISLANDS AND AFRICA: THE CASE OF ENGLISH¹**

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Date of publication: January 2023

DOI: 10.1344/transfer.2023.18.40343

1. Introduction

Translation and Interpreting are required in foreign trade activities when two parties that speak different languages, and belong to different cultures, decide to trade goods and/or services (Socorro Trujillo 2008). These companies expanding in international markets operate in a multicultural and multilingual framework where linguistic diversity plays a significant role in new trading arrangements and negotiations (Suárez-Ortega *et al.* 2017); hence the need for translators and interpreters specialized in international trade.

During the course of negotiations, we are able to find different stages in which the variety of texts involved is considerably diverse. These stages are, for instance, the purchase order, the logistic (related to transport and insurance) and payment (Orts Llopis 2016) in a multicultural context (Morón Martín 2016).

Socorro Trujillo (2008) compiled a texts classification in the field of international trade and divides texts into informative documents, official or administrative documents, transport documents and financial documents.

Each section of documents integrate a wide variety of text types, among which, we would like to highlight the invoices, that

¹ Publication co-funded by the “Consejería de Economía, Industria, Comercio y Conocimiento del Gobierno de Canarias” and the European Social Fund. This Research would not have been possible without the participation of the sixty-one companies that completed the questionnaire. Thank you very much to all of them.

contain the information of the products, their price and conditions, the packing list, that describe the product and its packaging, among other aspects (Solano Sánchez 2014), sea Bill of Lading, through which it is proved that the merchandise is on board and that is very relevant in this framework (Guillot Farnós 2015), the airway bill of lading, and the financial guarantee, in which the bank takes action (Socorro Trujillo 2008).

Apart from the text typology described by this author, that will entirely be taken into account in this Research, we have also consulted other authors that describe several types of documents that are used in international trade. In the case of advertising brochures, these can have a positive effect in a company when they work as sales incentives (Martínez Ruiz *et al.* 2010), whose translation requires understanding the recipient culture (Valdés Rodríguez, 2018). Technical reports and certificates are documents mainly issued by professionals that provide services such as engineering services (Gamero Pérez 2001). Their translation can be essential for knowledge exchange and transfer on a global scale (Congost Maestre 1994).

Finally, it is also relevant to underscore the importance of commercial correspondence, that works as a communicative instrument between companies located in different countries, and that can determine whether a trade happens or not (Socorro Trujillo 2012). There is a wide range of functions regarding commercial letters, that also correspond to emails, like presentation letters, letters including invoices, letters defining the conditions of a purchase, letters including transport conditions, etc. (Fontenay 1996). In this sense, and in a technological world, it is also appropriate to mention SMS's, that work in a fast way, especially in commercial contexts (Larrea Muxika 2012), as well as WhatsApp texts, that have a big social influence (Church & De Oliveira 2013).

All these types of documents have been considered in this Research, with the specific purpose of envisaging the most frequently translated documents from or into English in international trade between the Canary Islands and Africa.

Mayoral Asensio (2007) underscores the role of English as the *lingua franca* in international trade, stating that it acts as a guarantee of effective communication in international trade when interlinguistic communication fails for any reason.



In this framework, where many of the neighbouring African countries have French as the official or administrative language (Casa Africa), we would like to explore the incidence of English as vehicular language in written texts.

Within the context of this research, the objectives we would like to achieve are:

1. To find how often the companies of the Canary Islands need to translate documents from or into English for international trade activities with African countries.
2. To find the way the companies that need to translate documents from or into English for their international trade activities with Africa cover these services, and to uncover employment opportunities for English translators in the Canary Islands.
3. To find which types of documents the companies of the Canary Islands that export products or provide services to Africa need to translate from or into English and how often they translate them.

2. Materials and Methods

A questionnaire regarding these companies' linguistic needs was conceived to reach the aforementioned objectives. The targeted audience were those Canary Islands companies that export products or provide services to African countries.

Thanks to several public databases,² we name and contact persons, apart from other information, of these companies, to reach

² The first public database consulted was AfricaInfoMarket, a web portal created in 2002 by Canary public institutions, including the government of the islands and the chambers of commerce, where, after contacting all companies registered, we could identify twenty-one Canary companies that export products or provide services to African countries. We also consulted the data base included in PROEXCA's website. PROEXCA is a public company that belongs to the economics and trade department of the Canary Islands' government that aims to increase the competitiveness of the Canary companies worldwide through different supporting actions. In this case, we also contacted all the companies registered in their database and could finally confirm that fifty-one of them operate in African markets. Lastly, we browsed the Spanish Chamber of Commerce's record of exports, where we could also find the name of the companies that undertake these types of activities. In this case, there were several companies that appeared in the other data bases previously consulted, that were subsequently not considered. After contacting them, in order to verify that

the international trade managers, who are the respondents of these questions.

Finally, all the companies that we contacted and that confirmed that they truly operate in African markets, totalled seventy-nine companies. All of them were asked whether they could cooperate in the Research through the fulfilment of a questionnaire and fifty-three did accept and participate. When we individually contacted each of these fifty-three companies, we also asked them if they knew any other Canary company operating in Africa that was not registered in the aforementioned databases. Thanks to their information, eight other companies joined the Study and consented to fulfil the questionnaire. In sum, a total of sixty-one companies comprises the sample of this study.³

According to the objectives, the questions regarding the translation of documents from or into English for commerce with Africa are the following:

- 1) *Question number 1:* Do you need to translate documents from / into English for commerce with Africa?

To answer the question, the respondents were given the following options, among which they could choose just one: “never”, “weekly”, “monthly”, “a few times a year” and “rarely”.

Those who answered “never” would not respond to the other questions regarding their English documents’ translation needs.

The balance of the companies that choose “weekly”, “monthly”, “a few times a year” and “rarely” will be the sample for the following questions.

- 2) *Question number 2:* How do you cover these services?
 - a. With staff from the company
 - b. With the service of freelance translatorsOther (specify): _____

they operate in African countries, seven companies were added to the study’s population.

³ It is important to underscore that this questionnaire was initially conceived to be carried out through a survey platform. However, we did not obtain enough responses. Therefore, we finally conducted the survey through individual telephone calls.

The answers to this question will enable us to discern the employment opportunities of the translators based in the Canary Islands who work in the international trade field. In this sense, we will know whether the companies of the Archipelago that export products or provide services to African countries cover their English-translation services with staff from the company or with the service of freelance translators.

The following questions are composed of a list of documents regarding different stages and events in the context of international trade transactions.⁴

To outline the questions, we followed different authors' classifications, the first of which is Socorro Trujillo's (2008). She divides international trade texts into informative, administrative, related to transport, and financial documents. We also included specific correspondence texts, based on Fontenay's (1996) correspondence classification in the frame of commerce, as well as other types of documents that are relevant in this field, as defined in the previous chapters, like, brochures or technical reports.

Therefore, there is a first question regarding documents related to information, communication, customs, or quality control, that include different authors statements, like Fontenay's (1996) types of letters, as well as Socorro Trujillo's (2008) administrative and informative documents. Moreover, we asked for the frequency details (frequently, sometimes, rarely, or never) in order to distinguish the documents that are translated on a continuous basis.

The first question regarding the text types is the following:

3) *Question number 3*: What types of documents related to information, communication with the client, customs, or quality

⁴ The premise in the formulation of the question is to simplify as much as possible the list of documents. This is the reason why in some cases we adopted the upper level of the classification. For example, Socorro Trujillo (2008) details several accompanying sanitary customs documents, that are Inspection Application, Common Veterinary Entry Document, Fumigation Certificate, Phytosanitary Certificate, etc. Instead of placing them in individual rows, we decided to compile them in a single row as follows: Community goods customs documents (SAD, Summary declaration, Intrastat declaration, Form DV1, AGRIM Certificate, CITES Document or AGREX Certificate).

control do you need to translate from / into English for commerce with Africa and how often do you need it?⁵

Secondly, we followed Socorro Trujillo’s (2008) transport documents classification with the same premise of the previous one about simplifying the list of documents. Therefore, we decided to separate the documents regarding sea and air transport, which are the most common mode of shipment of goods that leave the Canary Islands and to compile the documents regarding other ways of shipment like, for example, river transport documents. As we did in the previous question, we also asked for the frequency details following the same objective.

The question regarding documents related to transport is:

4) *Question number 4:* What types of documents related to transport do you need to translate from / into English for commerce with Africa and how often do you need it?⁶

Thirdly, we added a question about financial documents in foreign trade. We abbreviated this question with the premise of simplifying the rows of the table where they are included. We have also followed Socorro Trujillo’s (2008) classification, and the question is:

5) *Question number 5:* What types of documents related to finance do you need to translate from / into English for commerce with Africa and how often do you need it?⁷

We have finally added a question in which the respondents can add any other type of documents they need to translate from or into English in the framework of their commercial activity with African countries that we did not mention.

⁵ The question includes a list of documents and the four frequency options mentioned (frequently, sometimes, rarely, and never). See Figure 3.

⁶ The question includes a list of documents and the four frequency options mentioned (frequently, sometimes, rarely, and never). See Figure 5.

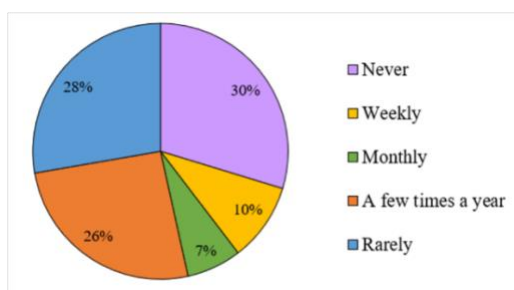
⁷ The question includes a list of documents and the four frequency options mentioned (frequently, sometimes, rarely, and never). See Figure 7.

6) *Question number 6:* Do you need to translate any other documents from / into English that we did not mention?

3. Results

1) *Question number 1:* Do you need to translate documents from / into English for commerce with Africa?

Figure 1: Incidence of the translation of documents from or into English for commerce with Africa, according to the sample of the Study



Source: personal elaboration based on statistics from the questionnaire

The largest proportion of the sample (30%) is composed of companies that do not need to translate documents from or into English in the framework or their activity with African countries. Secondly, 28% of them need to translate documents from or into English rarely and 26%, a few times a year.

Only 10% of the companies in the sample need to translate documents from or into English weekly and 7%, monthly. Considering these last pieces of information, we could say that 17% of companies need to translate documents in this language combination at least once a month.

Even if the answers reveal that documents are not frequently translated from or into English in the context of the activity with Africa, we can see that 70% of the companies translate documents in this language combination, at least occasionally, in a context where the neighbouring African countries are mainly French-speaking countries and the Canary Islands, Spanish-speaking.

2) *Question 2*: How do you cover these services?

This question was answered by the companies that answered to the previous question “weekly”, “monthly”, “a few times a year” and “rarely”, which means, those that did not choose the option “never” because they did not have to translate documents. The sample of this question is composed of a sum of forty-three companies that do translate documents from or into English for their commercial activity with Africa.

Figure 2: How the Canary companies that operate in Africa cover their translation services according to documents they need to translate from or into English

Answer	Number of companies	Rate
With staff from the company	29	67%
With the service of freelance translators	11	26%
Other (specify)	3	7%

Source: personal elaboration based on statistics from the questionnaire

Most of the companies (67%) cover these translation services from or into English for commerce with Africa with staff from the company. Also, 26% cover these services with the service of freelance translators and 7% answered “other (specify)”. These last ones had the same answer: “sometimes with staff from the company and, some others, with the service of freelance translators”.

3) *Question 3*: What types of documents related to information, communication with the client, customs, or quality control do you need to translate from / into English for commerce with Africa and how often do you need it?

As in the previous case, the sample for this question are the forty-three companies that do translate documents from or into English for their commercial activity with Africa.

Figure 3: Incidence of the translation of documents related to information, communication with the client, customs, or quality control for commerce with Africa

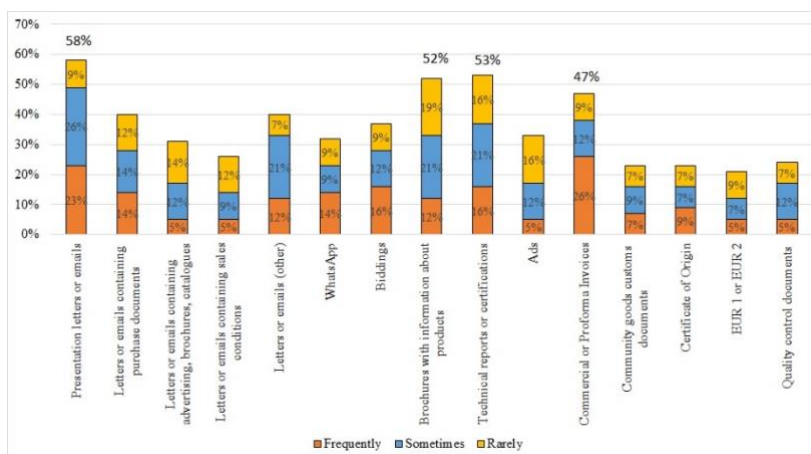
	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Presentation letters or emails	23%	26%	9%	42%
Letters or emails containing purchase documents (invoices, contracts, orders)	14%	14%	12%	60%
Letters or emails containing a claim	5%	12%	14%	70%
Letters or emails containing advertising, brochures, catalogues or information about the rise or descent of prices	5%	9%	12%	74%
Letters or emails (other)	12%	21%	7%	60%
SMS	5%	5%	9%	81%
WhatsApp	14%	9%	9%	67%
Biddings	16%	12%	9%	63%
Brochures with information about products	12%	21%	19%	49%
Technical reports or certifications	16%	21%	16%	47%
Ads	5%	12%	16%	57%
Commercial or Proforma Invoices	26%	12%	9%	53%
Community goods customs documents (SAD, Summary declaration, Intrastat declaration, Form DV1, AGRIM Certificate, CITES Document or AGREX Certificate)	7%	9%	7%	77%
A.T.A. Carnet	5%	0%	2%	93%
Certificate of Origin	9%	7%	7%	77%
Consular Invoice	2%	2%	12%	84%
EUR 1 or EUR 2	5%	7%	9%	79%
Form A / GSP Certificate	5%	0%	9%	86%
Form APR	2%	0%	2%	96%
Accompanying sanitary customs documents (Inspection Application, Common Veterinary Entry Document, Fumigation,	7%	2%	2%	88%

Phytosanitary, Aflatoxin or Phytopathologic Certificate)				
Quality control documents (Certificate of Acceptance, Certificate of Analysis, Dangerous Goods Declaration, Inspection Certificate, Quality Certificate, SOIVRE Certificate, Survey Report, Pre-shipment Inspection)	5%	12%	7%	77%
Halal Certificate	0%	0%	5%	95%
Export Unified Document	5%	9%	2%	84%

Source: personal elaboration based on statistics from the questionnaire

In accordance with the rate of companies that chose the option “never”, we can observe that several types of documents are not very much in demand to be translated from or into English (less than 20% of the sample). This is particularly the case of SMS, A.T.A. Carnet, Consular Invoice, Form A or GSP Certificate, Form APR, accompanying sanitary customs documents, Halal Certificate and Export Unified Document. This is the reason why we contemplated separating these results and considering the other types of documents that the companies of the sample need to translate more often in the further steps of a deeper analysis.

Figure 4: Incidence of the translation of documents related to information, communication with the client, customs, or quality control from or into English for commercial activity with Africa



Source: personal elaboration based on statistics from the questionnaire

In accordance with these results, we can observe that the most frequently translated documents related to information, communication with the client, customs, or quality control from or into English for their commercial activity with African countries are the following: presentation letters or emails (58%), technical reports or certifications (53%) and brochures with information about products (52%), as more than half of the companies need to translate them, as per their answers, followed by commercial or proforma invoices (47%).

Hereunder, we will focus on how often they need to translate these documents, considering for that purpose the value of “frequently”, “sometimes” and “rarely” in their answers.

As can be observed, the value of the frequency they need to translate these documents from or into English (frequently, sometimes, or rarely) enables us to obtain a vision of the documents that, independently of being translated by a larger or lesser number of companies, are more frequently translated. As with the case of invoices, 26% of the companies composing the sample translate them frequently; with presentation letters or emails, 23% need to translate them frequently; and with technical reports or certifications, 16% need to translate them frequently, as well as biddings, in the same proportion.

We can also see that this information is relevant because brochures with information about products, for example, are a type of document that many companies need to translate but the largest proportion (21%) need it “sometimes” and, secondly, “rarely” (19%). In the same vein, invoices were the fourth document that more companies needed to translate but, after considering the frequency, we can see that it is the document they need to translate more often (26%).

4) *Question 4:* What types of documents related to transport do you need to translate from / into English for commerce with Africa and how often do you need it?

Figure 5: Incidence of the translation of documents related to transport for commerce with Africa

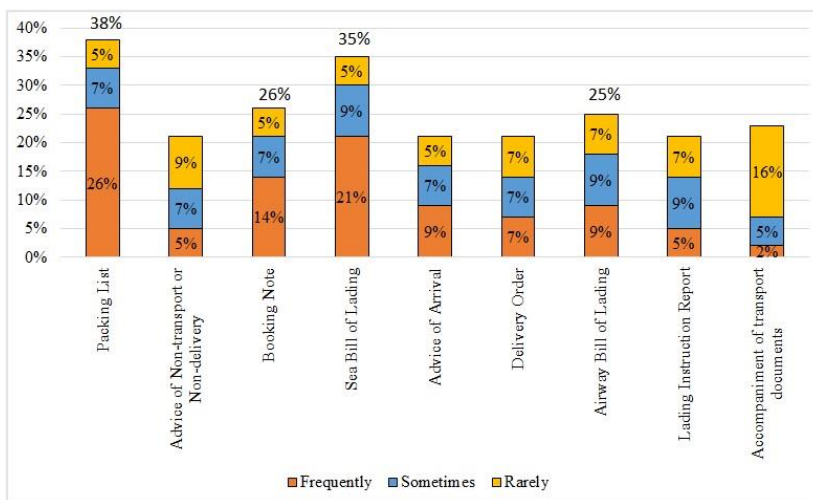
	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Packing list	26%	7%	5%	63%
Advice of Non-transport or Non-delivery	5%	7%	9%	79%
Booking Note	14%	7%	5%	74%
Forwarding Agent Receipt	7%	7%	5%	81%
Letter of Indemnity or Back Letter	7%	9%	2%	81%
Mate's Receipt	9%	5%	5%	81%
Charter Party	9%	5%	5%	81%
Sea Bill of Lading	21%	9%	5%	65%
Advice of Arrival	9%	7%	5%	79%
Delivery Order	7%	7%	7%	79%
Manifest of Cargo (sea or air transport)	7%	7%	5%	81%
Airway Bill, Air Consignment Note, air Bill of Lading	9%	9%	7%	74%
Master or House Air Waybill	2%	7%	9%	81%
Lading Instruction Report or Lead & Trim Sheet	5%	9%	7%	79%
Special Load Notification to Captain	2%	7%	2%	89%
River transport documents (River or Barge Bill of Lading)	0%	2%	2%	96%

Road or Rail transport documents (Road Consignment Note, TIR Carnet, Railway Bill or TIF Declaration)	5%	2%	5%	88%
Post transport documents (Parcel Post Receipt)	2%	2%	7%	88%
Multimodal transport documents (Combined or Multimodal Transport Document or Master's Receipt)	2%	7%	5%	86%
Accompanying transport documents (Insurance Certificate, Insurance Policy or Contract, Certificate of Damages or Survey Report)	2%	5%	16%	77%

Source: personal elaboration based on statistics from the questionnaire

We can observe, in accordance with the rate of companies that marked the option “never”, that certain documents are not frequently translated from or into English. This is the case, for instance, of the Forwarding Agent Receipt, the Letter of Indemnity or Back Letter, the Mate's Receipt, the Charter Party, the Manifest of Cargo (sea or air transport), the Master or House Air Waybill, the Special Load Notification to Captain, as well as river transport documents, road or rail transport documents, post transport documents and multimodal transport documents. As we mentioned before, the most common ways of transport that are used in the exports that leave the Canary Islands are maritime transport and air transport. These documents, that were selected by at least 80% of the companies as documents that they never translate from or into English for their commercial activity with Africa, will not be considered for the next deeper analysis.

Figure 6: Incidence of the translation of documents related to transport from or into English for commercial activity with Africa



Source: personal elaboration based on statistics from the questionnaire

As we can observe, the documents related to transport that a larger number of companies need to translate from or into English are the Packing List (38%), the sea Bill of Lading (35%), the Booking Note (26%) and the airway Bill of Lading (25%).

As we did previously, we will focus on how often the companies involved need to translate these documents, considering for that purpose the value of “frequently”, “sometimes” and “rarely” in their answers.

In this case, we can observe that there is a closer interrelation between the documents that are translated by a larger number of companies and those that these companies need to translate more frequently. These documents are the Packing List (26%), that was in both cases the first one; the Sea Bill of Lading (21%), that was also the second document that a larger number of companies needed to translate; the Booking Note (14%), was the third and the airway Bill of Lading (9%) in the same proportion as the Advice of Arrival (9%).

We would also like to highlight the case of accompanying transport documents, that need to be translated by 23% of the companies, as shown in Figure 7, that represent the fifth document. A larger number of companies need to translate them, but they only

represent 2% of those who need to translate them frequently, since 16% of them “rarely” translate them.

These types of examples prove the relevance of asking the respondents how often they need to translate the documents in order to check their actual relevance.

5) *Question 5*: What types of documents related to finance do you need to translate from / into English for commerce with Africa and how often do you need it?

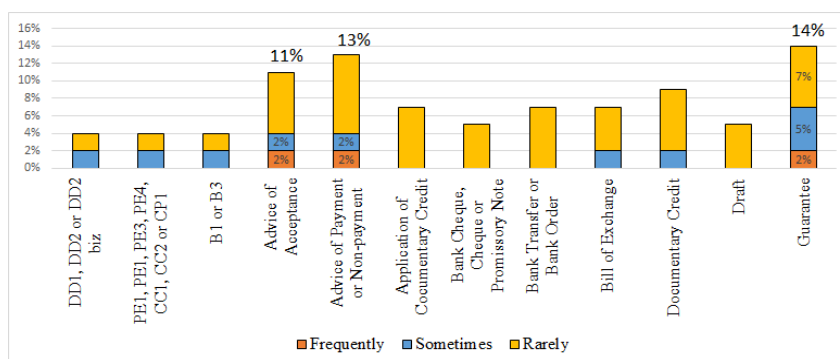
Figure 7: Incidence of the translation of documents related to finance from or into English for commerce with Africa

	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
DD1, DD2 or DD2 biz (foreign accounts opening, movements or cancellation)	0%	2%	2%	95%
PE1, PE1, PE3, PE4, CC1, CC2 or CP1 (non-residents loans or trade credits)	0%	2%	2%	95%
B1 or B3 (cash movements)	0%	2%	2%	95%
Advice of Acceptance	2%	2%	7%	88%
Advice of Payment or Non-payment	2%	2%	9%	86%
Application of Documentary Credit	0%	0%	7%	93%
Bank Cheque, Cheque or Promissory Note	0%	0%	5%	95%
Bank Transfer or Bank Order	0%	0%	7%	93%
Bill of Exchange	0%	2%	5%	93%
Documentary Credit	0%	2%	7%	91%
Draft	0%	0%	5%	95%
Guarantee	2%	5%	7%	86%

Source: personal elaboration based on statistics from the questionnaire

In this case, in contrast with the other questions about document translation, there is no financial document that at least 20% of the companies that compose the sample need to translate from or into English. We will subsequently take all of them into account for a deeper analysis.

Figure 8: Incidence of the translation of documents related to finance from or into English for commercial activity with Africa



Source: personal elaboration based on statistics from the questionnaire

We can observe that the documents related to finance a larger number of companies need to translate from or into English. These documents are the Guarantee (14%), the Advice of Payment or Non-payment (13%) and the Advice of Acceptance of Payment (11%)

As we did before, we will subsequently focus on how often the companies involved need to translate these documents, considering the value of “frequently”, “sometimes” and “rarely” in their answers.

We can observe that there is a clear correlation between the proportion of companies that need to translate documents related to finance and the frequency they do it. Despite having the same value in the case of “frequently”, the documents related to finance that are translated more frequently are the guarantee, the Advice of Payment or Non-payment and the Advice of Acceptance. In the case of the Guarantee, we can observe that 5% of the sample need to translate this document “sometimes” in contrast to the 2% of companies that need to translate “sometimes” the other two types of documents mentioned.

6) Question 6: Do you need to translate any other documents from / into English that we did not mention?

The forty-three companies that translate documents from or into English were those that could answer this question. Twenty-three answered the question and twenty did not.

As it consists of a free response question, we will present the answers after assembling the similar answers to create a classification of the contributions.

Figure 9: Other types of documents that the companies of the sample need to translate from or into English for their commercial activity with Africa

Answer	Number of companies	Rate
Contracts	8	19%
Product labelling	5	12%
Web site	3	7%
Certificates (Treasury certificates, social insurance certificates, medical certificate, immigration certificate, etc.)	3	7%
Training content	2	5%
Deeds	1	2%
Annual accounts	1	2%
Material for trade shows	1	2%
Documents for European Call for Bids	1	2%
Job specific material	1	2%
Documents regarding the introduction of the company	1	2%
Legal documents	1	2%
Articles or press releases	2	5%

Source: personal elaboration based on statistics from the questionnaire

We can generally observe that the “other” type of document that the companies of the sample need to translate from or into English with greater frequency is the contract. It is a type of document that is generally translated by certified translators. The second one is product labelling, followed by web sites and

certificates. There are also several companies (5%) that need to translate training content, as well as articles or press releases. We can also find that 2% of the sample also need to translate deeds, annual accounts, material for trade shows, documents regarding European Call for Bids, job specific material, documents regarding the introduction of the company and legal documents.

4. Discussion

This research has enabled us to verify that the companies that need to translate documents from or into English in the framework of their commercial activity with African countries do not frequently need to translate documents, because only 17% of them need translations in this language combination at least once a month. The services are generally covered by staff from the company, in accordance with the 67% attested to by the companies.

The answers to questions related to the type of documents that the companies operating in these countries would need to translate developed into a sort of ranking through which we can judge the frequency these documents are translated.

First, there was clear evidence of the importance of documents related to information, communication with the client, customs, or quality control. The answers given by the companies show that these are the documents that a greater number of companies need to translate the most and more frequently. These documents are invoices, presentation letters or emails, technical reports or certifications and biddings.

According to Socorro Trujillo (2012), commercial letters are essential in negotiation stages and could develop into a commercial agreement in the field of international trade. The results of this survey prove that in the framework of international trade between the Canary Islands and Africa, letters are prominent.

As the companies of the sample could be companies that export products or provide services, both documents related to transport and to services have been considered. In this case, technical reports or certifications are another relevant type of document that, according to Congost Maestre (1994), their translation can be essential for knowledge exchange and transfer on a global scale.

Secondly, in the case of transport documents, even if they have been less relevant than the first ones, and in line with what was just stated, they consist of a type of document that only arises when a company sends physical goods to another country. As the sample is composed of companies that export products and that provide services, only the exporters would need to translate documents related to transport. In this sense, we could confirm the relevance of Packing List (Solano Sánchez 2014) and sea Bill of Lading (Guillot Farnós 2015).

Thirdly, the translation of documents related to finance was not relevant in this study. We can only highlight that 14% of the companies need to translate Guarantees from or into English for their commercial activity with Africa.

Finally, we could also see that several companies need to translate other types of documents that were not included in the questionnaire, the most important of which being contracts and product labelling. We could add that the second ones are documents that only companies that produce physical goods would issue, which are those that could eventually export them and thereby issue transport documents.

This study enables us to determine that, even if English is not the official language of the Canary Islands, nor of the African neighbouring countries, it is a language that works as the global language in several cases. Even if the translation of the documents in this combination is not frequent, as it could be for instance from or into French (Álvarez Díaz & Adams 2021), it is the language from or into which 70% of the companies that participated in this Research translate documents for their commercial activity with Africa. The results show that the employment opportunities for translators who work with English in their language combination in the framework of international trade arise within the Canary companies that export products or provide services to African countries. The answers reveal that these companies rarely cover the translation services regarding this linguistic combination with the service of freelance translators.

In further research we would like to discern not only the translation requirements of the Canary companies that operate in African markets, but also the needs for interpreting, an area that focuses on oral communication. As we did with written communication through different types of text classifications

within the framework of international trade, we will focus on the communicative situations arising from negotiation processes in a context where there are both linguistic and cultural differences.

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Abstract:

The specific location of the Canary Islands constitutes a point of union between three continents: Africa, America, and Europe, and one of the main strengths of the potential of the Canary Islands lies in their growing trade relations with the African continent. The commercial relations between these two areas generally entail translation requirements as there is a linguistic and cultural barrier that separate them. In this framework, we can find several docu-

ments associated with the different international trade stages that are translated for the purpose of accomplishing a commercial transaction, in which suppliers, clients, shippers, managers, customs agents and other stakeholders take part. Moreover, English is considered the global language in international trade, whereas the geographic areas involved in this Research are not English-speaking, but mainly Spanish- and French-speaking, as the Canary Islands are Spanish-speaking, while many African countries located close to the islands have French as the official or administrative language.

The objective of this Research is to determine the most frequently used documents the Canary companies need to translate when exporting products or providing services to African countries: this includes the way these services are covered and how often they request these services when it consists of translating texts from or into English.

To this effect, a questionnaire regarding these translation requirements was issued to Canary companies that operate in Africa. Several document classifications in the field of international trade have been included in the questionnaire to ensure the utmost variety of possible answers. A total of sixty-one completed the survey, and the results obtained thanks to the collaboration of these companies show that even if most of the neighbouring African countries are not English-speaking, it is the language from or into which 70% of the sample needs to translate documents, particularly invoices, commercial correspondence, and technical reports.

Keywords: Translation; International Trade; Text Types; Canary Islands.

LA TRADUCCIÓ EN EL COMERÇ INTERNACIONAL ENTRE LES ILLES CANÀRIES I L'ÀFRICA: EL CAS DE L'ANGLÈS

Resum:

La ubicació específica de les Illes Canàries suposa un punt d'unió entre tres continents (Àfrica, Amèrica i Europa), però una de les fortaleres de les illes són les relacions amb els països del continent africà, que cada cop són més estretes. Les relacions comercials entre aquestes dues zones geogràfiques requereixen moltes vegades serveis de traducció ja que hi ha una barrera lingüística i cultural que separa aquests territoris. En aquest marc, es poden distingir diferents documents que intervenen en les diferents etapes d'una

transacció comercial a escala internacional i que es generen per tancar una transacció en què intervenen proveïdors, clients, carregadors, personal de duana i altres parts implicades. A més, es considera que l'anglès és la llengua mundial del comerç internacional, però les zones de treball d'aquesta investigació tenen l'espanyol o el francès com a llengua oficial, com és el cas de les Illes Canàries en el cas de l'espanyol i la majoria dels països africans de l'entorn de l'arxipèlag que té el francès com a llengua oficial o administrativa.

L'objectiu d'aquesta investigació és determinar quins documents tradueixen les empreses canàries de manera més freqüent a l'hora d'exportar productes o prestar serveis a països africans, cosa que inclou com cobreixen aquests serveis de traducció i amb quina freqüència els requereixen en la combinació lingüística espanyol-anglès o anglès-espanyol.

Per assolir aquest objectiu s'ha dissenyat un qüestionari que es va lliurar a empreses canàries que operen a l'Àfrica i es van prendre diverses classificacions de documents del comerç internacional per oferir als participants una varietat més gran de possibles respostes. Un total de seixanta-una empreses van participar a l'estudi, la qual cosa va permetre entreveure, gràcies a la seva col·laboració, que, encara que l'anglès no sigui la llengua oficial de la majoria dels països africans de l'entorn de les illes, sí que és la llengua des de o cap a la qual un 70% de la mostra necessita traduir documents, entre els quals destaquen les factures, la correspondència comercial i els informes tècnics.

Paraules clau: Traducció; Comerç internacional; Tipus de text; Illes Canàries.

LA TRADUCCIÓN EN EL COMERCIO INTERNACIONAL ENTRE LAS ISLAS CANARIAS Y ÁFRICA: EL CASO DEL INGLÉS

Resumen:

La ubicación específica de las islas Canarias supone un punto de unión entre tres continentes (África, América y Europa), pero una de las fortalezas de las islas son las relaciones con los países del continente africano, que cada vez son más estrechas. Las relaciones comerciales entre estas dos zonas geográficas requieren en muchas ocasiones de servicios de traducción ya que existe una barrera

lingüística y cultural que separa estos territorios. En este marco, se pueden distinguir distintos documentos que intervienen en las diferentes etapas de una transacción comercial a escala internacional y que se generan con el fin de cerrar una transacción en la que intervienen proveedores, clientes, cargadores, personal de aduana y otras partes implicadas. Además, se considera que el inglés es la lengua mundial del comercio internacional, pero las zonas de trabajo de esta investigación tienen el español o el francés como lengua oficial, como es el caso de las islas Canarias en el caso del español y de la mayoría de los países africanos del entorno del archipiélago que tiene el francés como lengua oficial o administrativa.

El objetivo de la presente investigación es determinar qué documentos traducen las empresas canarias de forma más frecuente a la hora de exportar productos o prestar servicios a países africanos, lo cual incluye cómo cubren dichos servicios de traducción y con qué frecuencia los requieren en la combinación lingüística español-inglés o inglés-español.

Para alcanzar dicho objetivo se ha diseñado un cuestionario que se entregó a empresas canarias que operan en África y se tomaron diversas clasificaciones de documentos del comercio internacional con el fin de ofrecer a los participantes una mayor variedad de posibles respuestas. Un total de sesenta y una empresas participaron en el estudio, lo cual permitió vislumbrar, gracias a su colaboración, que, aunque el inglés no sea la lengua oficial de la mayoría de los países africanos del entorno de las islas, sí es la lengua desde o hacia la que un 70% de la muestra necesita traducir documentos, entre los que destacan las facturas, la correspondencia comercial y los informes técnicos.

Palabras clave: Traducción; Comercio internacional; Tipo de texto; Islas Canarias.