

Transculturation Guidelines: Developing & Translating Materials For Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Populations

INTRODUCTION

These Transculturation Guidelines are intended to provide guidance through the development of materials in languages other than English. Transculturation means to communicate information from the perspective of the target audiences viewpoint so the intent can be understood, taking into consideration language, words usage, literacy level, form of communication (print, visual, auditory) and visual layout and design.

The issue is to think through the materials first in the context of the target audience. This is the true notion of transculturation. However, this is not always a real option. Therefore, where there is a lack of funds to do the transculturation or where there are already developed materials, transculturation is still the first step. Before beginning any translation, the developer of the materials needs to "step in the shoes" of the target audience to get a feel for what the concepts, ideas and information being developed look-like and feel-like regarding the target audience.

Steps for Selecting Someone to Develop Non-English Materials

1. Identify the target audience for the materials to be developed.
2. Acquire information about the target audience demographics, education, literacy levels, language spoken, communication style, beliefs about illnesses and help seeking and accepting behaviors.
3. Identify and contact individuals who can serve as key informants throughout the development process. Look for individuals who are knowledgeable and experienced with the target audience's beliefs, values, customs, traditions, language and communication styles.
4. Interact with the key informants to learn about the target audience. Ask these individuals for names of candidates who would appropriately develop materials for the target audience at the appropriate literacy levels.
5. Ask potential translators for samples of their work and 3 references, preferably from clients who targeted the same or similar audience. Again, the interest here is to have access to their "community and less literate audiences" as well as the highly educated and very literate members of the target audience. Don't assume if someone is a trained translator that they are the best candidate for developing materials for non-English speaking audiences.
6. Check each reference. Ask for a description of the work completed, budget, timeline, process and satisfaction with the services. Discuss the degree to which the materials relayed the intended message, at the appropriate literacy levels.
7. Based on Steps 1-7, select a candidate(s) and secure the assistance from the key informants throughout the development process.

Candidates Developing the Non-English Materials Must

- Be knowledgeable and understanding of the language, literacy levels, communication style, beliefs about illnesses, help seeking and accepting behaviors and reading level of the target audience.
- Be fluent in the target audience language if it is not the native language of the candidate.
- Understand how the target audience perceives the behaviors and symptoms of Alzheimer's disease and related disorders in addition to the terminology used by the target audience to describe this information.

Steps for Developing the Non-English Materials

1. Form a work group of individuals who are: bicultural and bilingual with respect to the target audience, knowledgeable about the local/regional idiom and language usages, and knowledgeable about Alzheimer's disease and related disorders.
2. Facilitate a discussion with the work group about the content to be addressed in the materials. Finalize the intended message of the materials.
3. Have the work group verbally explain the intended message to the developer of the material(s).
4. Develop a draft of the materials that best sends the desired message to the target audience. Keep in mind that some content may already exist in the target audience's language. Before using existing content, check the content to make sure it is current, accurate, terms and language used is familiar to the target audience and reflects the desired literacy levels. Check the Alzheimer's Association Diversity Toolbox for existing content and a glossary of terminology for the target audience.
5. Get feedback on the draft materials from representatives of the target audience who are willing to serve as reviewers. Individuals who are fluent in the target audience language and not involved with the development of the draft materials should gather feedback. Talk with each reviewer separately. Ask the reviewer to verbally describe, in their language, the content and message received through the draft materials. It is important for the individual receiving the feedback to document the reviewer comments in detail. Visit the Alzheimer's Association Diversity Toolbox for open-ended questions to use during this process (see "Cultural Competency Review Form").
6. Have the developer make revisions to the draft materials based on reviewer comments and guidance from the work group. Initiate the review process again with the initial reviewers in addition to at least 3 new representatives of the target audience. Ask each reviewer to provide feedback on the information covered in the material in addition to the style of communication (terms, definitions, literacy level, visuals, etc.). Take detailed notes if the feedback is gathered verbally. Present the feedback to the developer and the work group to make revisions to the draft. Continue the process until the reviewer comments are minimal.
7. Translate the final draft materials into English to test the integrity of the intended message. Make the final revisions to the document based on the discrepancies identified in the English translation.

As a result of using this process, the final product will be accurate and presented in a way the target audience is accustomed to hearing the message.

Reference

Valle, R. (1998). Caregiving Across Cultures: Working With Dementing Illness And Ethnically Diverse Populations. Taylor & Francis. 171-184.