

6	Vague pronouns: make sure that pronouns such as “it” and “this” refer to something specific.	f	Home care has been expanding tremendously over the past few years partly due to recent technological advances that enable assessments and treatments to be a part of the home setting which at one time could only be performed within the hospital environment.
7	Dangling modifiers: make sure that a modifying phrase or clause has something to modify.	g	The liquid was poured into a glass beaker. Being a strong acid.
8	Squinting modifiers: make sure the modifier clearly refers to the element you want to modify.	h	Much of the literature advocates stretching preparatory to exercise, however, the mechanisms are not well understood.
9	Mixed or dead metaphors: recognize the literal meanings of your metaphors; avoid clichés.	i	In the report it suggests that moderate exercise is better than no exercise at all.
10	Faulty word choice: don’t use “fancy” words for their own sake; use a dictionary to check words whose meaning you are not sure of.	j	Eating huge meals, snacking between meals, and too little exercise can lead to obesity.
11	Don’t spin empty words; use the minimum number of words.	k	By manipulating the lower back, the pain was greatly eased.
12	Comma splices: use semicolon as well as a conjunctive adverb to join two independent clauses.	l	Explaining the rationale for a treatment can help distil patients’ fears.

4.6 Genre shift: Drafting heterofunctional translations

Imagine the following assignment. Your client asks you to translate an original article published in English in the *British Medical Journal* <<http://www.bmj.com>> into a summary for patients in your mother tongue following the norms

of structure, type of information, tenor and length of the summaries for patients published by *Annals of Internal Medicine* at <<http://www.annal.com>>. Before you go to the next paragraph, have a look at a real example on the web. It will only take you five minutes.

We call this type of assignment genre shift. Genre shifts are performed within the same language (return to chapter 2 to see how, for example, summaries of product characteristics are transformed into patient information leaflets) or between two different languages. In this section, we will focus on the latter. You may also come across expressions such as heterofunctional translation (translation in which the function of the target text is not the same as that of the source text) or transgeneric translation (moving from one genre into another in the process of translation). They all mean the same thing.

In the assignment proposed at the beginning of this section, the source text becomes simply the source of factual information. Communicative purpose, reader's profile, length, structure, tenor, terminological approach, and other key aspects of the target text no longer depend on the source text but rather on the target genre.

A medical text is usually defined as a text written by a specialist for a specialist. However, this apparently straightforward definition does not reflect reality. The text or its translation may not be for another specialist and, what's more, depending on the assignment, the function of the target text can differ from that of the source text. In professional practice, the same specialized text could be translated for different reasons and purposes: as a newspaper report, an internal document, as a synthetic translation, as a sight translation, as an article in a mainstream magazine, or it could be rewritten as a resource text for a TV documentary or radio programme.

Genre shifts as part of the translation process normally occur from more to less specialized genres, and not the other way around. In other words, the target text is normally addressed to less specialized readers, often patients and the general public. Therefore, synthesis of information, terminological simplification (and even determinologization: see chapter 7), paraphrasing and common sense explanations of difficult concepts, and personalization of the language are some of the main procedures we have to use in order to carry out shifts of genre.

A methodology for assignments in which a genre shift is required

1. Define the assignment carefully and in full detail to determine the target genre and the target situation in which the text will be used. At this stage, it is useful to ask oneself 'who will read it and why?', consult web-based documents and other resources, and consider information types and language use. It is also helpful to skim the source text just to have a rough idea of the specific subject matter.

2. Find examples of the target genre in the target language. This will reveal the conventions of the genre that will have to be followed in the drafting of the target text: length, structure, types of information in each part, terminological approach, tenor, style of presentation and so on.
3. Read the source text for information.
4. Select the information that should be transferred to the target genre.
5. Start drafting the target text: (a) Focus on structure. (b) Continue the drafting process following the methodology suggested in this chapter: crafting and improving (see previous sections).

When translating research genres into genres for patients and the general public, the following procedures are frequently used:

- If necessary, expanding relevant information for the target reader. This is designed to reduce complexity by making key meanings explicit
- Shifting from author and content to reader's comprehension
- Adjusting tenor to achieve more personalized communication
- Simplifying structure
- Simplifying syntax
- Determinologizing complex terms
- Using verbs instead of complicated nouns or noun phrases.

Apart from the professional importance of genre shifts in the process of translation, there are two further reasons to take them on board and master them. First, they open up new job opportunities as a medical writer. Second, they improve your abilities as a medical translator in all kinds of assignments, even if there is no genre shift.

4.7 Drafting research papers in English

There is a growing need for researchers all over the world to publish their findings in international journals. Since English has become the *lingua franca* of research communication, translating papers into English – as well as rewriting, revising and editing them – in order to get them published in international biomedical research journals such as *New England Journal of Medicine*, *The Lancet*, *British Medical Journal* or *Annals of Internal Medicine* among thousands of others, is now an important market niche for medical translators. In this section we address a key issue: making the text acceptable for publication in an international journal. The editor will require you to observe:

- The Vancouver norms (see chapter 6). These norms are used by all international biomedical research journals.