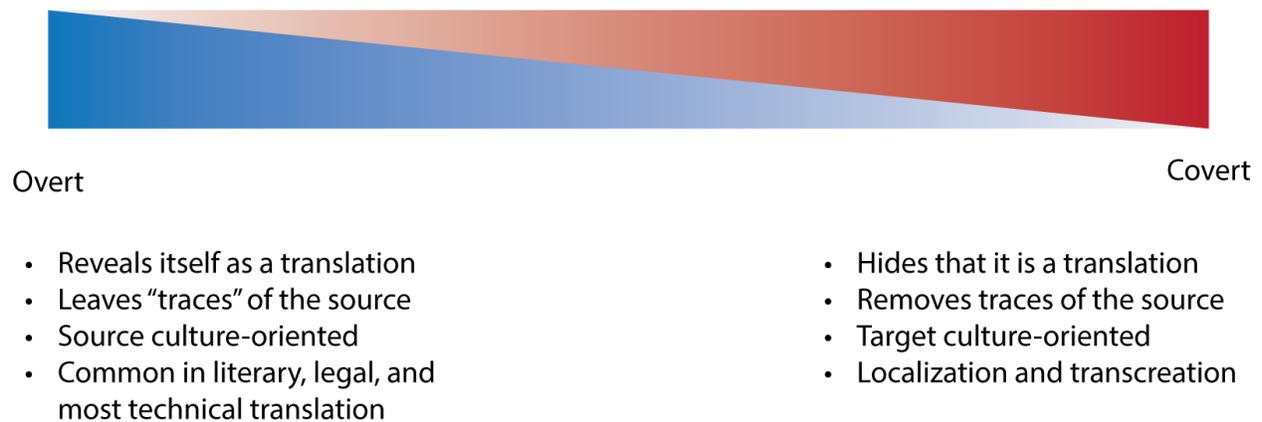


## The Overt-Covert Spectrum in Translation (v2f-AKM)



As suggested above, an **overt translation** makes no attempt to hide that fact that it is a translation. It is openly (overtly) a translation and is faithful to the source text and culture. A **covert translation**, on the other hand, does hide the fact that it is a translation. It is faithful to the target language and culture. That may involve some adjustments such as replacing source language idioms with target language equivalents, making some implicit information understood by an intended reader of the source text explicit for the benefit of the target culture reader, and in the extreme case, departing substantially from some aspects of the source text in order to accomplish the purpose of the translation for the intended audience. Juliane House first suggested the terms overt and covert, but many other translation scholars propose a similar distinction. For example, in literary translation, Venuti uses “foreignized” for overt and “domesticated” for covert. Christiana Nord uses “documentary” and “instrumental” to label types of translation.

**Transcreation**, which is typically specified for marketing materials with the intent of making a particular effect on the public, could also be called “extremely covert translation”. **Covert** translations appear to be written in the target language by a native of the language and culture.

**Localization** is always toward the covert end of the above spectrum. Localization began before the Web and applied to desktop software applications that were offered in various locales. A **locale** is the combination of a language and a region, such as French as used in Canada vs. French as used in France. The messages in the user interface of localized software are translated with the end user and target locale in mind, and the software product as a whole is adapted so that it has the look and feel of a product created in the target locale. Localization, a term whose application has expanded to include websites and multimedia environments, now consists of covert translation of textual aspects and adaptation of non-textual aspects (colors, images, etc.) of a product or service.

**Adaptation** is the process of adjusting or replacing something for a target audience. Audio-visual (also called multimedia) translation can be specified to be anywhere on the overt-covert spectrum.

This document is intended to be consistent with the definitions of translation and localization in ASTM F2575-14 (where localization is defined as “... translation of textual material into the language and textual conventions of the target locale, and adaptation of nontextual materials...”).