



# **Tweet/Weibo Translation**

(ZH>EN)

Many Gengo jobs in this pair are based on translation of a Chinese tweet. This section gives guidance to follow when handling this type of job. There are two approaches to translating a tweet, depending on the motivation behind the commission of the translation.

## For information

This should be regarded as the “default” mode for translating. The information in the original should be transferred into English as completely as possible, and while being concise is always good, there is no need to restrict the translation to a certain number of characters. Keep handles in characters, and add a translation in brackets afterwards if available. Use pinyin names unless the person or organization tweeting has an established English name:

- @中國國民黨 (KMT)
- @胡锦涛 (Hu Jintao)
- @周杰倫 (Jay Chou)

## For tweeting

In this situation, the customer should specify in the order form that the translation is to be used for publication as a tweet. In this case, the length of the translation should not exceed 140 characters. Some tools for helping you check the length of your translation are <http://www.lettercount.com/> and <http://www.twitter-character-counter.com/>.

If the translation is too long, first reread it to check if it can be rephrased in a shorter way, either by substituting synonyms or rephrasing sentences or clauses. It is not uncommon for source language interference to make translated sentences longer than they need to be. English contractions such as cannot -> can't may be used to save space, but please don't abandon correct punctuation or use non-standard abbreviations. Hyperlinks and emoticons should be kept. Leave handles in Chinese characters, as they lose their function if changed to pinyin.

One of the great things about the Chinese language, and one of the biggest headaches for Chinese translators, is that it can express ideas very succinctly. Therefore most translations from Chinese to English will end up being longer than the source. If, after rephrasing and rewording the translation, the translation is still above the character limit, you can split the message into multiple tweets by adding a number in brackets at the end of the last word of the tweet as below:

This message is overly lengthy, too wordy, one might say, and due to communicating its meaning using more alphabetic characters than (1)

strictly necessary or desirable, cannot be published in one "tweet", as a short missive on the service "Twitter" is known. (2)

Note that the number is added after the last full word that will fit in the character limit: do not split words between tweets.

In summary, you don't need to worry about length unless the customer specifies that the translation is for retweeting. If it is for retweeting, please follow the guidelines above to help you keep it within the character limit.