



A Judgment That Matters

AUTHOR: ROSEN IVANOV

How We Decide When Machine Translation Is Appropriate and When It Isn't

The Real Question Isn't Which MT Engine to Use



Modern AI-powered MT can translate thousands of words in seconds. Yet even the best engines can miss cultural nuance, industry terminology, or regulatory intent.

According to the **Association of Language Companies**, language service providers increasingly rely on MT to improve efficiency, but technology alone cannot guarantee quality for every project.

□ At 1-StopAsia, we start by asking: **Is machine translation the right solution for this content at all?**

When MT Works and When It Doesn't



Successful localization isn't a choice between speed and quality, it's about finding the right balance for each project type.

The risks escalate when content influences **purchasing decisions, legal compliance, or public perception**. Getting the workflow wrong can lead to:

- Inconsistent terminology across markets
- Reduced customer trust
- Compliance failures and delayed launches
- Costly post-publication rework

Quality Standards Differ Across Asian Markets

Identical MT output can perform well in one market and poorly in another. Quality itself changes according to the audience.

Japan

Technical documentation demands exceptional consistency and formal writing conventions throughout.

Korea

Customer communication depends on selecting precisely the right level of politeness for each audience.

Thailand

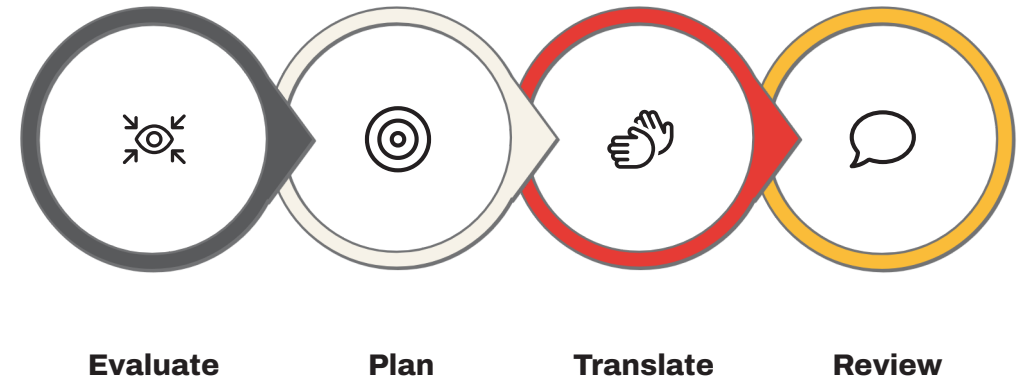
Clear, concise sentence structure is essential complex English instructions rarely transfer naturally.

China

Marketing content frequently requires full transcreation to preserve commercial impact and cultural resonance.

Quality Assurance Starts Before Translation Begins

Many organizations associate quality assurance with proofreading after translation. In practice, an effective QA process begins long before any content enters production - evaluating regulatory requirements, terminology complexity, budget, deadlines, and publication risk before selecting a workflow.



MT Errors Are Usually Context Problems

What Machines Miss

Tone

Audience Expectations

Cultural Conventions

Industry Language

Most serious MT errors don't occur because machines struggle to understand **context**.

- A technically correct sentence may use terminology unfamiliar to local engineers
- A marketing slogan may preserve literal meaning while losing persuasive impact
- Customer support copy may sound too direct in Japanese or overly formal in Korean

These problems often escape automated quality checks because the grammar appears correct.

Two Projects. Same Technology. Different Workflows.

Software Knowledge Base

Thousands of help-center articles updated weekly across Japanese, Korean, and Simplified Chinese. Content is repetitive, terminology standardized.

Recommended: MT + translation memory + glossaries + professional post-editing. Excellent efficiency without compromising quality.

Medical Device Documentation

Regulatory approval manuals for Japan and South Korea, including operating procedures, safety warnings, and maintenance instructions.

Recommended: Human linguists with medical expertise. Patient safety and compliance leave no room for interpretation errors.

❏ The technology hasn't changed. The business context has. That distinction determines the right workflow.



Human Expertise Strengthens MT Quality Assurance

Machine translation has become remarkably capable, but it still cannot evaluate intent, cultural expectations, or business impact. Native linguists remain responsible for decisions machines cannot reliably make.

→ **Identify Inconsistencies**

→ **Protect Brand Voice**

→ **Verify Compliance**



The Right Judgment Delivers Better Localization

Machine translation is one of the most valuable tools in localization, but it is not a universal solution. Knowing when to use it requires understanding the content, the audience, the market, and the consequences of getting it wrong.

Not sure whether MT is right for your next project? **Talk to the specialists at 1-StopAsia.** We'll help you choose the workflow that balances speed, cost, and quality, ensuring your content performs in every Asian market.

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