

When the Source Files Disagree

A Government Translation Case Study on how a discrepancy between a PDF and an InDesign file was caught before it reached print, and what that reveals about effective government translation.

AUTHOR: ROSEN IVANOV

The Discrepancy No One Was Supposed to Miss

The same page, in the same document, carried two different numbers in two different files. The PDF stated that early-childhood educators could earn five professional development hours. The InDesign source said ten. Only one was going to print.

⚠ The translation team caught this before it became a publishing error, by examining source materials closely, not just translating them.





A Complex Government Publication

The Client & Scope

A U.S. state agency overseeing early-childhood programs needed its **2025 revision cycle** translated into Simplified Chinese.

47,879	~170	21
Words Translated	**InDesign Pages**	**Business Days**

Three Non-Negotiable Requirements

Approved Terminology

A client-provided glossary of program terms and funder-approved equivalents. Some were differing from conventional usage and had to remain exactly as specified.

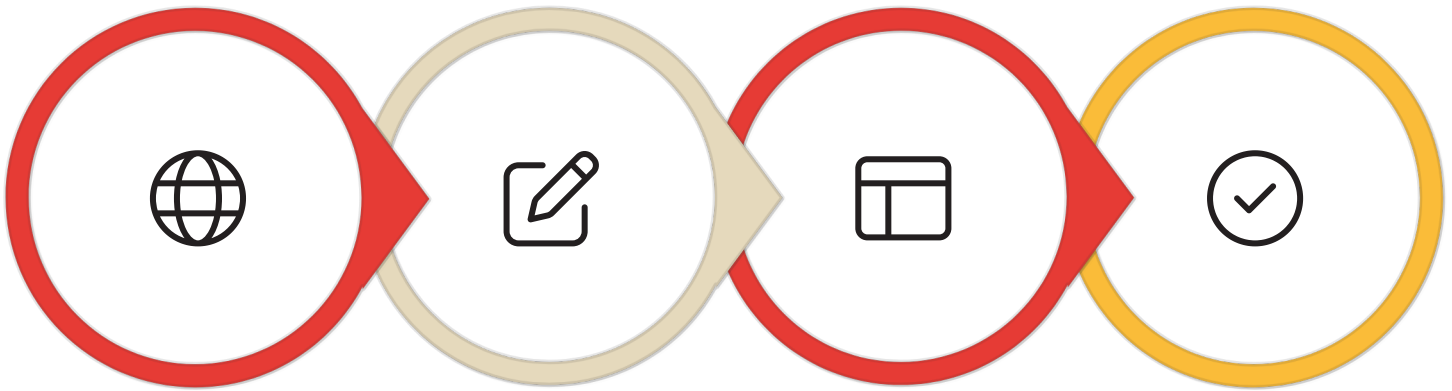
Strict Content Fidelity

Instructions were explicit: translate the approved English faithfully, without extending its meaning or optimizing the content in any way.

Layout Accuracy

Introduction pages contained screenshots of assessment pages elsewhere in the document. Two fonts were also missing from the InDesign package, requiring DTP coordination.

One Integrated Workflow



1-StopAsia managed translation and desktop publishing as a single integrated project - two linguists and one editor working within an agreed 21–23 business-day schedule from confirmation.

Three Decisions That Kept the Project on Track

1 Resolving Font Issues Early

Within one day, two missing fonts were identified. Written client approval was obtained to use the closest matching alternatives if originals could not be activated.

2 Aligning DTP With Document Structure

Assessment pages were translated first, allowing Introduction screenshots to be replaced with their translated counterparts, preserving visual consistency throughout.

3 Investigating Conflicting Source Content

The five-versus-ten-hour discrepancy was flagged, provisionally translated using ten, and escalated to the client. The course team confirmed ten hours was correct.



Translation QA Beyond the Text

Checking a translation means more than verifying the target language is accurate. **True production QA** means identifying inconsistencies in the source materials, raising the right questions at the right time, and ensuring that every confirmed decision is reflected throughout the final files.

Delivered on Time With an Error Caught Before Print

Full Translation & DTP

47,879 words in Simplified Chinese with complete desktop publishing across ~170 pages.

Delivered on Day 21

Completed on the earliest day of the agreed 21–23 business-day window, with no schedule impact from mid-project clarifications.

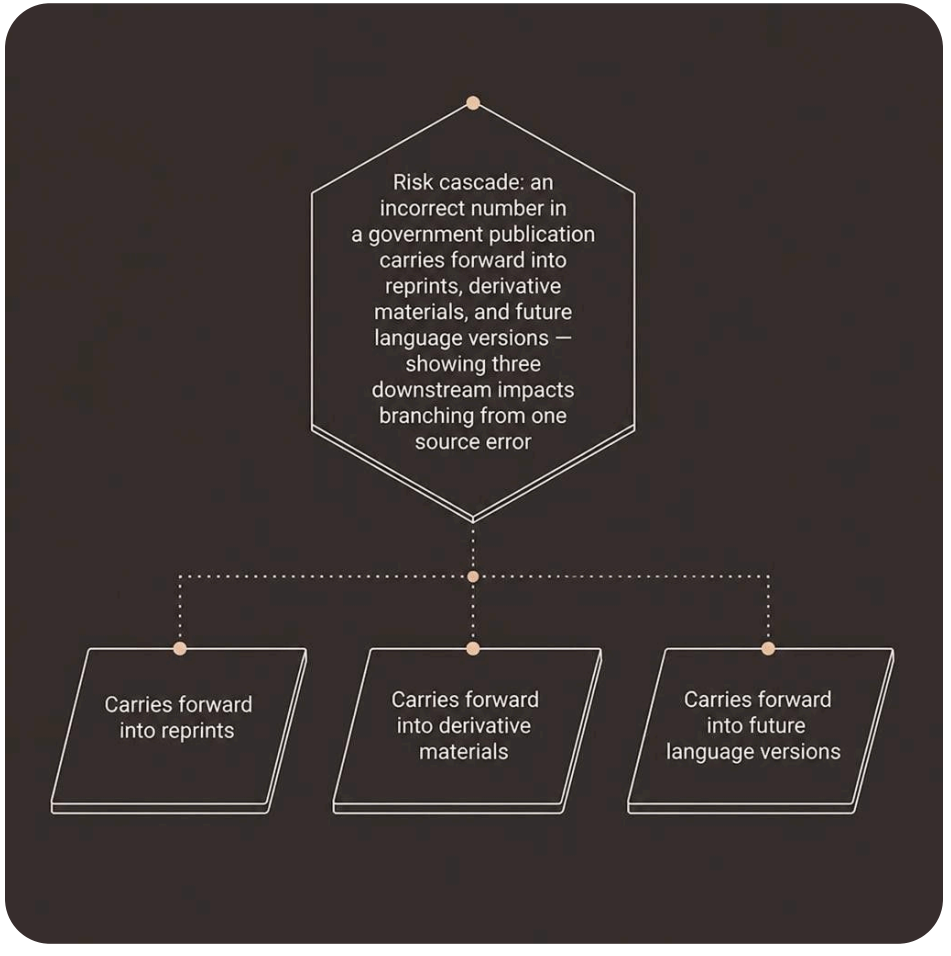
Clean Handover

Single-folder delivery, acknowledged the following morning by the account partner with no follow-up questions recorded.

One Discrepancy Resolved

Source-integrity error identified, escalated, confirmed in writing, and corrected before the document reached print.

Why Government Translation Requires More Than Accuracy



Government publications and assessment instruments can remain in active use for years. A single incorrect value can propagate into reprints, derivative materials, and future language versions.

A provider that simply translates what appears in the working file may reproduce an inconsistency without ever realizing it. Reliable government translation requires a production process where linguists, editors, and DTP specialists can:

- Flag discrepancies across source files
- Obtain documented client decisions
- Carry those decisions through to final delivery

Publication-Ready. Every Time.

For agencies preparing multilingual publications, effective government translation combines **linguistic expertise**, **production coordination**, and **DTP capability**, delivered as one integrated service that catches errors before they reach print.

Linguistic Accuracy

Approved terminology, strict fidelity, expert editing

Source Integrity

Discrepancy detection before it becomes a print error

DTP Excellence

Layout-ready files, resolved fonts, visual consistency

