GLTaC
Lives depend on our translations.

Introduction

How many times have you approached a task, only to find you did not have the right tool for the job? In today's translation market you find companies that offer services based upon a single tool, whether that is all Human Translation (HT) or all Machine Translation (MT) with nothing in-between. That would be the same as needing to drive a nail, but only having a sledge hammer or a tack hammer to choose from.

Having more tools in your "toolkit" means having more control over the three factors of "Cost, Quality and Time." As pressure mounts to shorten the development cycle, competitive businesses are relying more and more on MT to bring documents back into English. Applying a human post-edit to the MT improves the quality and creates an intermediate process called Machine Aided Translation (MAT) that achieves a quality level between 80% and 90% of an HT.
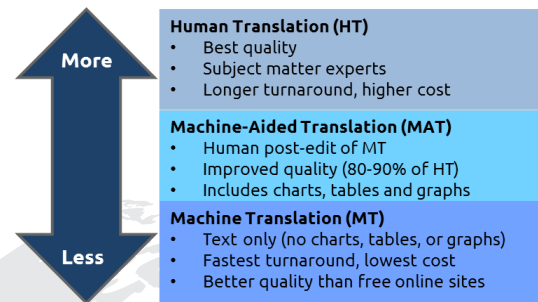
Business Challenge

You have a document in a language you cannot read which may be vital to your research or of no importance at all. A Machine Translation (MT) would save significant time and money, but may not produce the quality you need to make an informed decision. A Human Translation (HT) would give you the quality you need but is considerably more expensive and would take longer to complete. If only there were an intermediate step that combined the speed and low cost of an MT with a level of human post-editing.

Solution

While the concept of three translation levels (MT, MAT, HT) sounds confusing at first, it is in practice quite simple. MT has little or no human intervention while MAT has a human post-edit phase that raises the quality of the document to 80-90% of the level of a full HT (best quality).

Customers who use the full range of services quickly learn to maximize the benefit to their organization by mixing and matching the services to best suit their translation needs.

As with MT, the quality of the MAT depends heavily on the quality of the source document. The human post-editor is capable of making finer distinctions than a machine by itself, but when there is substantial ambiguity in the original document, even a human sometimes has trouble identifying the correct meaning.

More / Less

Human Translation (HT)
- Best quality
- Subject matter experts
- Longer turnaround, higher cost

Machine-Aided Translation (MAT)
- Human post-edit of MT
- Improved quality (80-90% of HT)
- Includes charts, tables and graphs

Machine Translation (MT)
- Text only (no charts, tables, or graphs)
- Fastest turnaround, lowest cost
- Better quality than free online sites

Scenarios

There are many ways to combine the factors of Cost, Time and Quality. The rule of picking any two of the three still applies when dealing only with HT, because the quality level will be held to a high standard and if you want it in a hurry you will pay a premium.

With MT and MAT, it is possible to receive a good document, fast for about 1/3 to 1/4 the cost of an HT. A customer-focused translation company should allow you to receive a translation in a way that fits your business need, such as:

1. An MT for the meeting tomorrow and an HT in a week or two.

2. An MT of several documents in a few hours, followed by an MAT of those documents chosen for improvement in a few days.

3. An MT of a ten page technical article, followed by an HT of pages three to five in forty-eight hours.

Like a detective you quickly move from document to document, screening out the irrelevant and focusing on only the information that will move you forward toward success.

One Requirement, Many Solutions:
An Overview of Human, Machine, and Machine-Aided Translation

Summary

As more information appears in languages other than English, you no longer have the luxury of simply ignoring those foreign language documents. How you bring foreign patents and technical articles back into English depends on the quality level you need.

- MT - Screening tool that provides a "gist" of the document

- MAT - A human post-edit of the MT, improving the readability

- HT - The most precise translation, applied where needed

You control the cost and time spent on a document, using the tools above to do more research, in less time for a competitive edge.

Comments, questions, and suggestions are welcome and appreciated. Reach us at info@gltac.com.