LQA: Measuring Quality in Translation
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Linguistic Quality Assessment (LQA)*

“A formalized process for auditing the quality of a translation based on standardized metrics appropriate to the content type.”

*a.k.a. in-country review, ICR, client review etc.
DON’T PANIC
LQA: Why so painful?!?

Common Pitfalls

- No standardized quality metric = conflicting definitions of “quality.”
- Failure to recruit qualified reviewers, train them and set clear expectations.
- Failure to establish comprehensive project specifications beforehand.
- No terminology management.

- Lack of adequate context (style guide, reference material).
- Lack of support for queries during translation.
- Lack of clarity in feedback.
- “Blame game” results in defensive or disengaged translators.
DON’T PANIC
LQA: So why do it?

A sampling of the many benefits derived from effective LQA

• How are we doing? Is our process working?
• Fosters a commitment to quality through the supply chain.
• Common language for talking about translation quality.
• Basis for evaluating improvements to authoring or localization processes.
• Basis for negotiating price and turnaround service levels with translation providers.
• Vital business intelligence for demonstrating the value of your localization spend.
• Managed quality leads to better translation products, accelerating time-to-market and increasing customer engagement. And likely reducing costs too.
DON'T PANIC
LQA: How to do it well?

- **Define It**
  - Business objectives
  - Project, Content specs
  - SLAs

- **Measure It**
  - Quality metric(s)
  - Qualified resources

- **Track It**
  - Consistent, comparable BI over time
  - Evaluate process changes

Define It, Measure It, Track It
LQA: Define it

Warning! Quality control is not a solution for poor process.

Step 1-n: improve quality assurance processes:

- Establish guidelines for writing for translation.
- Manage terminology.
- Maintain style guides.
- Provide context, reference materials.
- Engage in query resolution during translation.
## LQA: Evolution of “Translation Quality”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Dimensions of Translation Quality</th>
<th>Sample Metric</th>
<th>Error Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>“Accuracy” (transmission of meaning from source to target) and “Fluency” (grammatically correct – target only)</td>
<td>SAE J2450</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>“Verity” (suitability to locale, real world context)</td>
<td>LISA QA</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>“Adequacy” (fit for purpose)</td>
<td>TAUS DQF</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Flexible framework building on all above, plus custom categories</td>
<td>MQM</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Harmonized MQM/DQF subset</td>
<td>MQM/DQF</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customizable metrics for various business objectives, content requirements, or available resources.
LQA: MQM (multidimensional quality metrics)

Customizable, comparable metrics:
- Number of error types
- Granularity
- Weighting by type and severity
- Pass/fail thresholds
- Supports “Holistic” vs. “Analytical” LQA
LQA: Measure it

- Recruit and train LQA reviewers to be qualified and engaged.
- Ideal LQA reviewer is an SME in content **and** target language.
- Foster environment focusing on quality products.
- Set feedback expectations, i.e. “change A to B because X, Y and Z.”
- LQA needs specs, terminology, style guides, source language too!

Various models possible:
- Internal, in-country sales, support or customer reps
- Internal translators, localization staff
- In-country partners, e.g. distributors
- Third party outsourced translators
- Separate, dedicated team within service provider
LQA: **Track it**

- Consistent use of standardized, comparable metrics = vital BI data.
- Close the feedback loop to translators, TM and termbases.
- **Shorten distance and time with tech** – centralized resources eliminate file sharing and enables easy business analytics.
DON’T PANIC
Key Takeaways

Improve translation quality assurance:
• Clear content/project specifications
• Terminology management
• Style guides
• Close the feedback loop

Recruit and train engaged, qualified resources:
• Train on translation and set clear expectations
• Make all project resources available for LQA

There is no one-size-fits-all definition of translation quality. Develop metrics on requirements and constraints:
• MQM/DQF subset good for 80% of use cases, and extensible
• MQM-based metrics are comparable
• Track and evaluate analytics

Shorten time and effort with technology
• Centralized resources
• Clearer and shorter communications channels
• Built-in metrics, reporting
LQA Resources

Common Sense Advisory: Linguistic Quality and Metrics
(https://www.commonsenseadvisory.com/marketing/linguisticqualityandmetrics.aspx)

QT21: MQM, Multidimensional Quality Metrics

Translation process, specifications guidance:
  (http://www.astm.org/Standards/F2575.htm)
• ISO 17100 (superceding EN 15038), “Translation services -- Requirements for translation services”
  (http://www.iso.org/iso/catalogue_detail.htm?csnumber=59149)
• ASTM WK41374, “New Practice for Language Service Companies”
  (http://www.astm.org/DATABASE.CART/WORKITEMS/WK41374.htm)
XTM on the Web

Trial account
www.xtm-intl.com/trial

More information
www.xtm-intl.com
Thank you