



**1-STOP ASIA**  
EVERY WORD COUNTS

# The Challenge of (not) Understanding Asian Languages

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*A webinar sharing experience*

# Welcome to the world of Asian languages

Your hosts today:



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Global Marketing Manager



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Account Project Manager

# I. Briefly on Asian languages translation

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# The “small” peculiarities of Asian languages

We can't discuss Asian languages translation without outlining some general information prior to diving into the specifics. We decided to briefly outline a criteria on how we designate them in different groups:

- Characters and/or ideographs
- Abugidas
- Languages that adopted the Latin alphabet



# What makes them different to translate?

When it comes to the essence in translations we've designated 3 major factors that are probably valid for any other language as well but we simply cannot skip them.

- Diversity
- Honorifics
- Cultural differences

And this is where we will stop with the purely linguistic information about Asian languages...

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**The big question is...**

**Do you need to speak Chinese  
to process it professionally?**

**The answer I'd give you is NO!**

**In reality**

**The most important thing  
is UNDERSTANDING!**

Not the very language but what lies behind it and how to navigate it. Knowing this you can anticipate certain things in order to fit an Asian language translation project into the expectations of your clients.

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# Outlining the content for today

- Quotations and what lies behind them
- Desktop publishing for Asian languages
- Marketing an LSP offering Asian languages to LSPs





## **II. Quotations and what lies behind them**

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# What is so special about them?

- There are specific ways to operate with CAT tools
- There are different ways of preparing quotations depending on the source and the target language
- The type of language usually depends heavily on the target audience

And these are not all...



# It is just word count! What could go wrong?

- Quote given based on “target characters” means you’ll not know the final price before it is done
- For Asian languages into European - quote may be given per source language, which is again calculated per character instead of per word
- If you don’t have the proper addition to the MS word, you won’t get the correct count
- Even if you see the character count in MS word, then you receive a higher word count by your vendor



## Example:



A client comes with a request for a quote for Chinese Simplified into English. You check the MS Word file, and see the word count instead of the character count. Based on this number, you give your clients a quote. This is the first incorrect step which might not be called to your attention. Not until the payment comes. It may happen that you've quoted based on the MS Word word count, but that doesn't count the characters in the way that they should be. Not unless you have the proper additions to MS Word must be included. In reality your vendor's quote was probably based on the character count, and in this case, you might lose a sizable amount of money.

## Why does this happen?

1. They simply can't be counted per word due to the writing systems they use



Chinese: “巧妇难为无米之炊 (qiǎo fù nánwéi wú mǐ zhī chuī)”

Japanese: 吾輩は猫である。名前はまだ無い。どこで生れたか  
とんと見当がつかぬ。

2. No digital copies in the past

Unicode started handling Asian languages some 10 years ago.



# Key takeaway

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Charge your clients the same way you pay for the service. Always ask your vendor to give you the total amount for a certain translation request in addition to the rates per word or per character. That will ensure no future surprises regarding the total amount due at the end—for you or your clients.

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## Time: what about it?

And no we are not going to tell you “time is of the essence”.

We'd like to show you the differences and unique features of handling Asian languages so you can gain an understanding of the real mechanisms behind the turnaround-time (TAT) and how we estimate it.

## Key factors affecting delivery

- Resources availability and their diversity
- Time differences
- Formatting and QC
- Internet speed in Asian countries
- Blocked websites due to politics



# Key takeaway

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Our advice is simple:

for optimal quality, consider a capacity of  
**1500 words** per day.



# Support materials and information

- Additional information
- Target audience
- Target market
- Glossaries and TMs
- Out of scope or in scope
- Names and addresses



Even though Vietnamese is mainly spoken in Vietnam, you have a file that is supposed to be used before the Vietnamese Immigrants Community within the USA. In this case, we may need to use different terms and styles due to the fact that many of these Vietnamese immigrants are the descendants of boat people, who were anti Communists and moved to the USA after the Vietnam War. The language they use, like term preferences, style, even vocabulary, is very different from the mainstream Vietnamese of the people permanently living in Vietnam. You may often get complaints from your clients if you use translators who are currently living in Hanoi.

# APM's watch list for quotes in Asian languages

We've compiled this list, which we hope will find helpful in your daily routine in working with Asian languages.

Download now!



**And to go back to the main accent...**

**Do you need to speak Chinese or any other Asian language, to process it professionally?**

**Did I convince you that the  
answer is NO?**

# Real-life examples from Rosen

Take some notes!  
There will be a Q&A session later.



# III. The Magic of Desktop Publishing

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# Fonts and why they matter?

## A real-life story:

We had a person reach out to our Marketing team a few months back with a request for advice. He was supposed to hold a presentation in China at a very big conference. Upon submitting the documentation he was given a hint from his Chinese colleagues that the documentation needed more work to be done. The documentation was translated into Chinese Simplified and a designer made excellent design on it. However, there was a “tiny” detail about it that spoke volumes :)



# The “tiny” details

Do you want to guess what the detail was?

The reason the presentation needed work was the choice of fonts used in it along with the small details like the usage of spaces, moving the sentence on the other line or the way the English names were written in the text.

**Solution:** recommendation of suitable fonts for the designer to apply and then desktop publishing performed on the documentation.





## The rest of the picture uncovered

All of the differences that we've already discussed above like cultural differences, language writing systems lead to very different perceptions for design creation and user experience for Asian audiences.

That reflects in the way documentation is created along with any other type of content. So when it comes to the preparation of documentation for any Asian country, it is very important to consider whether you need desktop publishing for a particular document.

An example might be considering whether you need a design to have Japanese written vertically or horizontally.

# A few examples

## Chinese language

The font weight order for Chinese is totally opposite from that of English—in Chinese, it is descending from heavy to light, while in English it is the other way around. This is valid for other Asian languages like Korean, too.

## Japanese language

Italics are not used with Japanese language simply because of the way Japanese is written.

## Korean language

There are differences between North and South Korean. One such example are English-style quotation marks for South Korean and French-style guillemets for North Korean.

# Key takeaway

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Desktop publishing is a solution for all those cases when one is not sure if a translation is ready to be shown to the intended audience in Asia or vice versa.

In case you are not sure your Asian languages provider should be able to give you advice upon seeing the files you have provided for the project.

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## **IV. The Mix: Marketing Asian languages for LSPs**

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# The many layers of the translation industry

End-clients

LSPs - MLVs - SLVs working with end clients

**Large LSPs working with LSPs**

Smaller LSPs - MLVs - SLVs working with LSPs

Freelancers - SLVs working with LSPs - Small LSPs and local vendors

# Where we are positioned

Large LSPs working with LSPs

And you need to throw into the mix the “narrow” scope of Asian languages, which makes targeting the correct audience quite a challenge.

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## A throwback in time

3 years ago we had to do a full reconsidering of our MKT strategy:

- Outdated website with very little traffic
- Little to none requests online
- Inconsistent brand and chaotic brand presence
- Only channel of lead generation was word of mouth

# What we had to do?

- Start the website from scratch
- Identify the channels we had
- Research our customers pain points
- Decide on a strategy to target our potential customers





# Our Strategy

## Ideal goal of 1-StopAsia

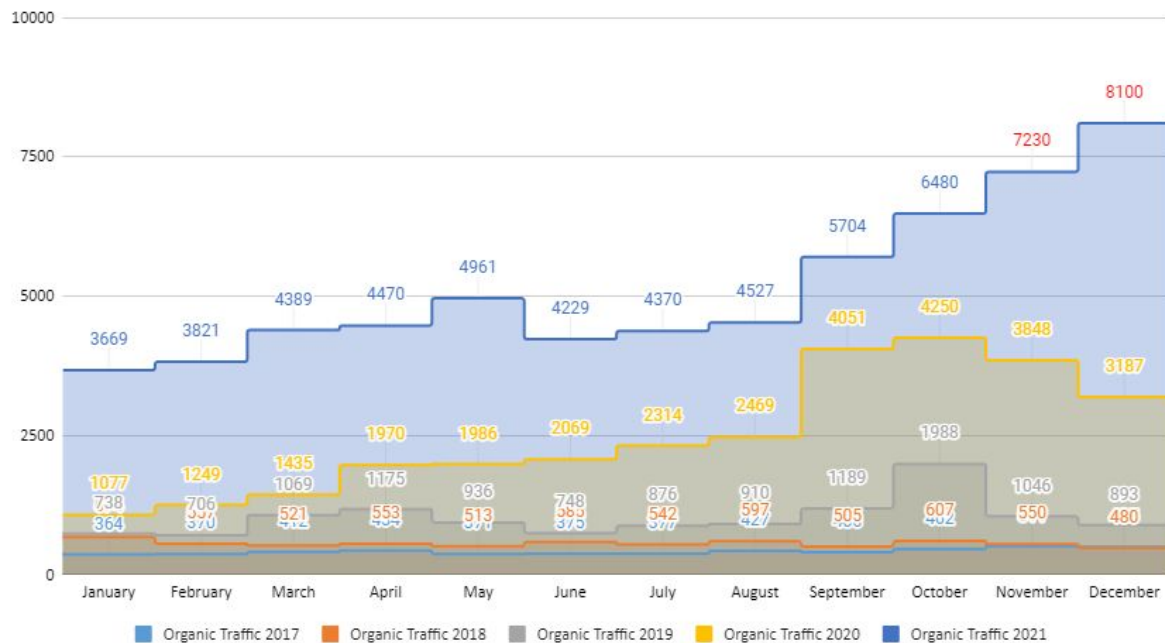
- Bridge the gap between East and West
- Educate our clients
- Help them become better at understanding Asian languages translation

## How this helps us?

*If our clients sell more effectively, we have more work.*

# Where we are now

## Organic Traffic 2017-2021



# What we learned on the way

- Content is still king—up to a few months ago 70% of our traffic came from our content
- Quality over Quantity is the most difficult thing to achieve
- Measuring the outcome of all the changes is one of the challenges we faced
- Teamwork is key to the success of all marketing efforts. People are our greatest asset!



# Reaching the goal

- Consistent brand throughout all our channels
- Strong content—our own branded blog ([Pulse of Asia](#)) on translation industry, cultural differences and linguistic information
- Collaboration with other institutions—publishing content with GALA for example
- Creation of our own annual magazine—*Pulse of Asia*
- Publishing a book on Asian languages translation, which is now a reality ([Asian Languages Translation - As Simple As It Gets](#))

*Sharing* knowledge  
builds stronger *partnerships*.

# Welcome to the world of Asian languages

Send us your questions:



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# Thank you!

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We'll be happy to answer your questions.