

# TRANSLATION SOFTWARE BUYER'S CHECKLIST

A handy guide to choosing the right translation solution



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## A translation software evaluation checklist helps enterprise and regulated teams assess security, compliance, workflow fit, and long-term scalability before selecting a vendor.

Choosing translation software is not just a language decision. It affects how your organization protects sensitive data, meets compliance standards, integrates with internal systems, and controls operational costs.

Many tools appear similar at first glance. In practice, they differ significantly in enterprise readiness, particularly in areas such as auditability, authentication controls, Translation Memory management, and support for regulated industries.

## PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

- Define must-have requirements before vendor comparison
- Support IT, security, compliance, and procurement reviews
- Identify workflow gaps before contracts are signed
- Conduct structured, defensible vendor evaluations

## WHO THIS GUIDE IS FOR

This checklist is built for translation teams that cannot afford workflow surprises, compliance gaps, or security shortcuts after implementation.

If your organization requires **IT approval, security review, vendor risk assessment, or compliance signoff before purchasing software**, this checklist is designed to support that process.

### Examples of organizations that will benefit:

- **Language Service Providers** (LSPs / LSIs) managing multi-client projects
- **Healthcare organizations** handling protected health information
- **Educational institutions** (K-12 and higher ed) managing student or research data
- **Enterprises** translating legal, financial, HR, technical, or proprietary documents

### This guide is not intended for:

- Casual or personal translation use
- Free consumer translation tools
- One-off, low-risk translation scenarios



## HOW THE CHECKLIST ITEMS WERE SELECTED

Enterprise software decisions rarely fail because of what was visible during a demo. They fail because of what wasn't asked during the evaluation.

**This checklist was built around the questions IT, security, compliance, and operations teams typically raise during vendor reviews.** Including the requirements that often surface after contracts are signed.

It reflects common enterprise procurement and security review criteria, including:

- Common vendor risk management requirements
- IT security and authentication standards
- Regulated industry compliance expectations
- High-volume document and OCR workflows
- API-based integration needs
- Audit and reporting capabilities

It also accounts for gaps organizations frequently discover after implementation, such as insufficient audit trails, limited glossary controls, missing OCR capabilities, or rigid Machine Translation engine options.

***The objective is simple: give your team full visibility before vendor commitment, not after deployment.***

## KEY DEFINITIONS

Before working through the checklist, it's helpful to clarify a few terms that often appear in vendor conversations. These definitions are intentionally brief and operational: **focused on how they affect your workflow**, not marketing language.

### **Machine Translation (MT)**

Automated translation generated by AI or machine learning systems.

### **Translation Memory (TM / TMX)**

A database that stores previously translated segments so future translations remain consistent and efficient.

### **OCR (Optical Character Recognition)**

Technology that converts scanned documents or image-based PDFs into editable text.

### **Secure Gisting**

A fast, high-level translation used to understand meaning without requiring a polished or production-ready output.

### **Role-Based Access Control (RBAC)**

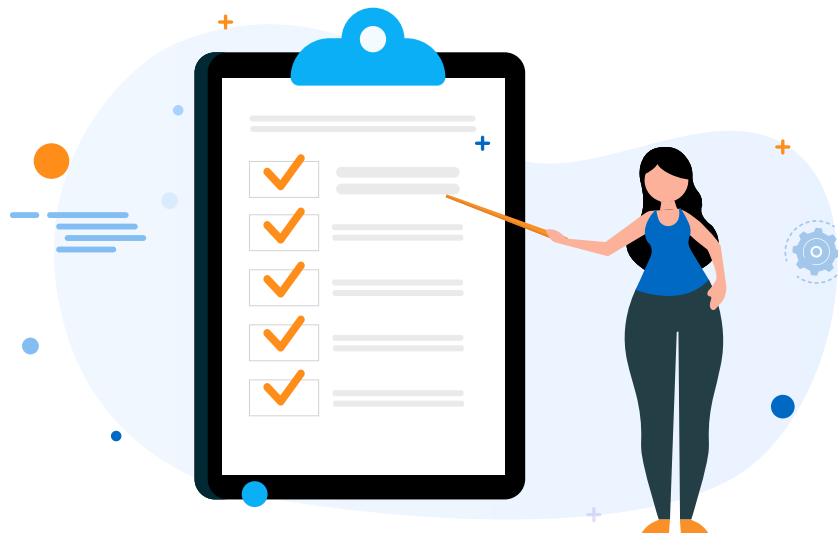
A permission structure that restricts system access based on defined user roles.

### **API-Based Translation**

System-level integration that allows translation workflows to connect directly with other platforms or applications.

## HOW TO USE THIS CHECKLIST

1. **Review** the features that are required for your organization on the lists below.
2. **Identify and check** which items are mandatory for security, compliance, or workflow reasons.
3. **Use your completed checklist** to define “must-haves” before reviewing vendors.
4. **Fill out the Software Comparison Chart** to compare software side-by-side.



### ✓ CORE TRANSLATION CAPABILITIES

- Web-first application** (Ensures your team can securely access, collaborate on, and manage translations from anywhere—without installations or version control issues)
- Broad language & language pair support**
- Translate into multiple languages at once**
- Batch file translation** for large-scale projects (upload and translate multiple documents at once instead of one-by-one)
- Automatic file formatting** (Retains original layout, images, and font styles so you don't have to reformat manually)
- Broad file format compatibility** (Translates all the file types you need)
- Translate scanned PDFs & images with OCR** (Optical Character Recognition – technology that converts images of text into editable text)
  - ABBYY OCR integration** (A premium OCR engine known for high accuracy and reliability, especially in complex documents)

**Your organization's required file formats:**

**Your organization's required languages:**

 **TEXT PROCESSING & CUSTOMIZATION**

- Character count display** of both source text and translated text, essential to identifying text expansion/contraction issues.
- Secure gisting** for quick, confidential copy-and-paste translations (Gisting provides a rough, fast translation for understanding the text's meaning)
- Custom Translation Memories** to enhance quality & consistency (Stores past translations to improve consistency in future translations, see also below for automation)
- Translation editor** for advanced editing & review
- Custom translations** to refine machine-generated output

## **SPEED, AI & AUTOMATION**

- Fast translation processing** for high-volume workloads (Handles large batches quickly, ideal for enterprise environments)
- Dynamic Machine Learning** that adapts over time (Learns from user input to improve translation accuracy automatically)
- Translation Memories** for saving and automatically reusing translations
- Terminology Management & glossary integration** for terminology consistency
- Auto-detect language** feature for seamless translation input
- AI-powered assistance** (Includes access to tools like ChatGPT and Large Language Models for help with rewriting, summarizing, or refining content)

### **Machine Translation engine flexibility**

- Switch between translation engines** for optimal results (Choose the best-performing engine based on subject matter, language pair, or document type)
- Turn off translation engines** when manual translation is needed (Use human input only when higher accuracy or sensitivity is required)

### **Machine Translation engines & AI models supported**

Each engine brings strengths for different use cases, industries, or languages.

#### **Microsoft Translator**

Strong enterprise integration with Microsoft products like Word, Excel, and Teams. Reliable for business content with broad language coverage and consistent performance.

#### **Google Translate**

Extensive language support and fast processing. Ideal for high-volume translation and general-purpose content across many global languages.

#### **Amazon Translate**

Scalable and cost-efficient for large-volume translation. Well-suited for real-time and batch workflows, similar to Google Translate for high-throughput use cases.

#### **ChatGPT**

Context-aware translations powered by advanced language models. Excels at nuance, tone, and post-editing assistance for more natural, human-like output.

#### **DeepL**

Known for high-quality, fluent translations—especially for European languages. Produces natural-sounding results with strong accuracy for professional content.

#### **Other** \_\_\_\_\_

## **COLLABORATION & PRODUCTIVITY TOOLS**

- Real-time team collaboration** (Cloud-based platform where multiple users can work on the same translation simultaneously, no matter their location)
- Translation tracking** with full edit history by segment (Shows who made which changes and when, for transparency and accountability)
- Instant messaging** for real-time communication
- Segment bookmarking** for quick reference (Mark important sections for easy access during editing or review)

## **Terminology & Translation Memory management**

- Glossaries**
  - Term lookup & auto-apply terms** (Automatically finds and inserts approved terms into translations for consistency)
  - Build a glossary**
  - Clean a glossary**
  - Import a glossary** (Upload existing glossaries in standard formats like CSV or TBX to speed up onboarding)
- TMX's**
  - Build a TMX** (Translation Memory eXchange – a standardized format for sharing translation memories across tools)
  - Import a TMX**
- Bypass Translation Memory** when needed (Turn off TM suggestions for creative, one-off, or sensitive content that requires a fresh translation)

## **Error prevention & workflow efficiency**

- Spell checker** for error-free translations
- Auto-save** functionality to prevent work loss
- User permissions & role-based access controls**

## **Support & user access**

- Live human technical support**
- Transferable seats** for flexible team access
- Onboarding** and implementation support

## ANALYTICS

- Tally of words used**
- Translation audit**
  - Editing Time (Track how many words you've translated to monitor usage and plan budgets)
  - Segments Modified
  - Words Modified
  - Total Words
  - Total Segments
  - MT Engine (Identify which machine translation engine was used for each project for performance comparison)
  - Last Modified (date & time)

## SECURITY & COMPLIANCE

- Enterprise security** to protect sensitive data
- Data processing transparency** documentation (including AI data use)

### Authentication & data protection

- 256-bit SSL certification** (Industry-standard encryption for secure internet communications)
- SHA-2 & 4096-bit data encryption** (A strong encryption algorithm used for data security)
- Encrypted file storage** in transit, in use, and at rest via a reputable hosting provider
- No data sharing** (No Return)
- OKTA integration** (A platform for identity and access management)
- Single Sign-On (SSO) support** (Allows users to access multiple applications with one login)
- PCI-compliant** payment processing (Meets security standards for handling credit card transactions)
- TLS 1.2** (Transport Layer Security – ensures encrypted data transfer)
- Multi-factor device authentication**
- User permission controls**
- Last login date & time display**
- Automatic session logoff** for inactivity
- Auto-lock** after failed password attempts

- Password** expiration protocol
- Third-party security audit & assessment records**
- User audit trail**
- Other** \_\_\_\_\_

### Compliance standards

- HIPAA compliant**
- SOC 1 compliant**
- ISO 27001 compliant**
- SOC 2 Type 2 aligned**
- GDPR compliant**
- FERPA compliant**
- Other** \_\_\_\_\_

### **INTEGRATION & COMPATIBILITY**

- Cloud-based** (no installation required)
- Robust API** for system-wide integration
- Google Drive** integration for direct file access
- Microsoft Office & SharePoint compatibility**
- Other** \_\_\_\_\_

### **SUPPORTED PLATFORMS & BROWSERS**

#### Platforms

- Windows**
- macOS**
- Other** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Browsers

- Chrome**
- Firefox**
- Microsoft Edge**
- Safari**
- Other** \_\_\_\_\_

## SOFTWARE COMPARISON CHART

First, define your must-have requirements using the checklist above. Next, at the top of the table below, enter other vendors you're considering next to Pairaphrase, our AI Translation Management System. Check off the items those vendors include. Use this information to make your purchase decision.

| Feature / Capability                                   | Pairaphrase              |  |  |
|--|--------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Core Translation Capabilities</b>                   |                          |  |  |
| Web-First Application                                  | ✓                        |  |  |
| Multi-Language Batch Translation                       | ✓                        |  |  |
| Automatic File Formatting                              | ✓                        |  |  |
| OCR for Scanned PDFs/Images                            | ✓                        |  |  |
| ABBYY OCR Integration                                  | ✓                        |  |  |
| Supports Required File Types                           | <a href="#">See List</a> |  |  |
| Supports Required Languages                            | <a href="#">See List</a> |  |  |
| <b>Text Processing &amp; Customization</b>             |                          |  |  |
| Character Count Displays                               | ✓                        |  |  |
| Secure Gisting   | ✓                        |  |  |
| Custom Translation Memories                            | ✓                        |  |  |
| Translation Editor                                     | ✓                        |  |  |
| <b>Speed, AI, &amp; Automation</b>                     |                          |  |  |
| Fast Translation Processing Speed                      | ✓                        |  |  |
| Dynamic Machine Learning                               | ✓                        |  |  |
| Translation Memories                                   | ✓                        |  |  |
| Translation Glossaries                                 | ✓                        |  |  |
| Auto-Detect Language                                   | ✓                        |  |  |
| AI Assistant (LLM Support)                             | ✓                        |  |  |
| Multi-Engine MT Options                                | ✓                        |  |  |
| <b>Collaboration &amp; Productivity</b>                |                          |  |  |
| Real-Time Collaboration & Integrated Instant Messaging | ✓                        |  |  |
| Segment-Level Audit Trail                              | ✓                        |  |  |

|  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| Segment Bookmarking for Quick Reference                              | ✓ |  |  |
| Term Lookup & Auto-Apply Terms                                       | ✓ |  |  |
| Glossary Management: Building, Importing, & Cleaning                 | ✓ |  |  |
| TMX Management: Building & Importing                                 | ✓ |  |  |
| Bypass Translation Memory When Needed                                | ✓ |  |  |
| <b>Error Prevention &amp; Workflow Efficiency</b>                    |   |  |  |
| Spell Check, Auto-Save & User Permissions (RBAC)                     | ✓ |  |  |
| <b>Support &amp; User Access</b>                                     |   |  |  |
| Live Human Technical Support & Onboarding                            | ✓ |  |  |
| Transferable Seats for Flexible Team Access                          | ✓ |  |  |
| <b>Analytics</b>   |   |  |  |
| Comprehensive Usage Tracking (Words, Segments, Editing Time)         | ✓ |  |  |
| Full Audit Trail (Translation Audit, MT Engine, Last Modified)       | ✓ |  |  |
| <b>Security &amp; Compliance</b>                                     |   |  |  |
| End-to-End Data Encryption (SSL, SHA-2, TLS 1.2, Storage)            | ✓ |  |  |
| SSO, OKTA & Multi-Factor Authentication                              | ✓ |  |  |
| User Security & Audit Controls (Login/Session Tracking, Audits, PCI) | ✓ |  |  |
| Key Compliance Standards (HIPAA, SOC 1/2, ISO 27001, GDPR, FERPA)    | ✓ |  |  |
| <b>Integration &amp; Compatibility</b>                               |   |  |  |
| Cloud-Based Deployment (No Installation Required)                    | ✓ |  |  |
| API Integration (Google Drive, MS Office/SharePoint Compatibility)   | ✓ |  |  |
| Broad Platform & Browser Compatibility                               | ✓ |  |  |

## ✓ WANT A SOLUTION THAT CHECKS ALL THESE BOXES?

Pairaphrase is the AI Translation Management System for teams that value smarter, faster and safer translation. Learn more at [pairaphrase.com](https://www.pairaphrase.com).

*Have additional compliance, language, or workflow requirements? Our team can help you evaluate fit.*



"Extremely easy-to-use software - really very intuitive. I was amazed at how quickly I was translating my articles into various languages. Most important is that the integrity of my layout was not affected by the translation. Absolutely remarkable."

- Karen Synesiou, Director



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**Pairaphrase Complete AI Translation Solutions**

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