

HOW TO FILL IN AN RCA

ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS IN TRANSLATION

WHAT IS AN RCA?

RCA stands for **Root Cause Analysis**.

This is an additional document to the LQA, where the **client asks to analyse the critical points of a project that has gone particularly wrong and to propose corrective measures**.

Usually, RCAs are formed by **three main parts**:

- Self-analysis of errors
- Reason why these mistakes were made
- Corrective and preventive measures to prevent the problem to repeat

HOW TO FILL AN RCA

If you are asked to fill in an RCA, it means that there has already been an arbitration and unfortunately the mistakes made are real and the accountable linguist accepted them in a previous LQA scorecard.

At this point in the Quality Assurance process, the **client wants to see proactivity**. To avoid this type of error being made again, the linguist has different options:

- Proposing calls with client's reviewers
- Suggesting the creation of a style guide or a project-specific glossary
- Reorganizing reference material for the whole team in order to make it more clear
- Suggesting a double step of revision in the process
- Proposing to implement project-specific QA checks in the process

However, you cannot remain vague, therefore **you must analyse the situation by talking to the PM first to understand what you can and cannot say**. For example, it is possible to say that the timing was particularly tight, but only if the PM had asked for more time that was not granted; instead, it is not possible to say that the job was entirely entrusted to a new resource with little experience on the account.

SELF-ANALYSIS OF ERRORS

In most of RCAs, there's a part to fill in where you simply have to describe what errors were made: which category and which severity applied to most issues. This is useful to make the final result and the need for an RCA very clear also to someone who was not involved in the LQA step or did not see the concerning scorecard.

Here sentences can be short and simple, but they must be very clear.

For example, you could say:

- *Minor errors concerning Language were purely linguistic issues: prepositions, plurals, capitalization and spacing issues.*

REASONS WHY THESE ERRORS WERE MADE

At this point, you have to explain why these errors have been made:

- Was it a technical problem?
- Was there any reference missing?
- Was it possible to perform a QA check or was the document impossible to check?
- Was there a glossary to help linguists being consistent?
- Was the TM correctly aligned?
- Were the instructions/style guide misleading?
- Was the purpose of text and context clear?
- Were there any pending queries?
- Could have client been more specific about a request?

In this section, you must be very specific because it is crucial for all the parties involved to really understand what went wrong in the process.

Again, you cannot be vague, but you must address a real issue that prevented you from delivering a good quality job.

For example, according to your scenario, you could say:

- *The main cause for the issues reported was probably a misinterpretation of some strings due to highly specific content which was somehow more technical than the usual stream of work and our resources have not logged any query to clarify their doubts. This has happened probably because at first, content seemed clear and straightforward but feedback revealed that our best judgement was not enough here and more research was necessary in order to get more context and details about what the article was really talking about.*

Being specific about what caused the error is very important for three main reasons:

- It helps to “justify” linguist’s mistakes and therefore to keep client’s trust
- It helps client to understand what should change from his/her side to get better results in the future
- It helps linguist to do the same

CORRECTIVE MEASURES

At this point, linguist have to suggest corrective and preventive measures in order to avoid to repeat the same error in the future.

That’s the whole point of filling in an RCA document: linguist should take action and show how progress can be made.

Again, you cannot be vague: statement like “We assure this won’t happen again” alone are not allowed. Client wants to understand in details how the whole process will change after this negative feedback.

You should start from what caused the error in the first place and then suggest an idea to prevent that from happening again.

For example, according to your scenario, you could say:

- *Source text must be read carefully by both translator and reviewer. Feedbacks have been shared with both translator and reviewer in order to make them more aware of what went wrong. Reallocation of resources has been taken into account.*
- *Client’s suggestions have been fully noticed and shared with all the parties involved in the project. We strongly believe this kind of results won’t appear again in our scorecards, but still we try to consider this fail as an opportunity to get more focused on specific aspects on the XXXX projects and to be fully aware of what needs to be done to satisfy client’s expectations.*

ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES

SELF-ANALYSIS OF ERRORS	REASONS WHY	CORRECTIVE MEASURES
<p><i>Most of minor issues highlighted during LQA concerned accuracy and language.</i></p>	<p><i>Most of issues highlighted during LQA concerned accuracy and language. Unfortunately, these types of errors cannot be detected by running a QA tool such as Xbench and sometimes they are missed even though we read all translations carefully.</i></p>	<p><i>To avoid that these avoidable issues appear again, we decided to implement an internal third step revision: if something is missed in the first step, we want to make sure it does not arrive to the delivery step. We consider reallocating time budget and resources on this account. Furthermore, we are now really motivated to ask more questions to XXXX Language Lead to improve our final quality; if we will be in doubt about a stylistic decision, we will send a query in order to make sure to always convey company style.</i></p>
<p><i>Most issues reported by reviewer concerned accuracy and more specifically some mistranslation and omission issues were highlighted by the feedback.</i></p>	<p><i>Unfortunately, TM contains 100% matches that were actually incorrect. Since we relied on those matches (being out of scope), we eventually spoilt the overall result.</i></p> <p>OR</p> <p><i>Since different vendors worked on this account and there’s no away to distinguish approved segments from not-yet-reviewed segments in the</i></p>	<p><i>A call with the Language Lead has already been scheduled in order to keep all the team aligned with client’s expectations and tone. After that, we will write down a best practice document for all our linguists involved according to Language Lead’s suggestions. An internal checklist is in place in order to avoid repeating the same mistakes.</i></p>

	<i>TM, the whole team relied on high fuzzy matches that were actually incorrect.</i>	
SELF-ANALYSIS OF ERRORS	REASONS WHY	CORRECTIVE MEASURES
<i>One major issue was caused by a misinterpretation of source text while the second one was caused by a heavy rephrasing of the target (that did not mirror exactly source text).</i>	<i>The majority of issues here were probably due to a technical problem in the downloading and uploading file process. There were some strings (that here are flagged as minor issues) that appeared as CM in Studio and therefore out of scope according to HO instructions, but it seemed after delivery that on tool they appeared as 99% match and therefore in scope. Our translator and internal reviewer did not take these strings into account during the process because of the reason mentioned above.</i>	<i>All QA checks are already run with client's glossary and DNTs to make sure that all the terms are compliant with term base. We are sending all the feedbacks to the resource that took care of the translation and we ask our resources to comment on every reported issue in order to make sure everyone is aware of what needs more attention. If something in source text is not clear or if more context is needed, we ask our resources to be more proactive and log queries. We also consider reallocating some resources in order to assign jobs exclusively to translators who are more familiar with the localization of more technical content.</i>
<i>Most issues concerned consistency errors within multiple tasks.</i>	<i>Unfortunately, different vendors worked on the same project and since they all had different accounts, it was not possible to run a consistency check for all files.</i> OR <i>Unfortunately, as per client's request, only reviewer had the credentials to access to online TM and therefore linguists were not aligned to client's expectations and terminology.</i>	<i>If we have any doubt, we will promptly address the LL: we are now more friendly with the account REF and we know that answers are always very quick to get. We got in touch with technicians in order to find a possible way to run a single consistency check for all the files before delivery. We are going to send updates as soon as we get an answer from the team.</i>