Research and Study on How to Examine Foreign Language Written Patent Applications in Light of Changes in the Social Environment

In recent years, the number of patent applications filed with the Japan Patent Office (JPO) has been flat or on a gradual downward trend. While the number of patent applications is on the rise worldwide, it is important to analyze the reasons for the sluggish growth in the number of patent applications to Japan for Japan to continue to be an "intellectual property nation".

According to a report by the Japan Patent Office, foreign companies are citing the reduction of translation costs as an issue that needs to be addressed. One way to reduce the cost of translation is to use machine translation, and machine translation can be used in various ways, such as by submitting the translation or by using the original document.

On the other hand, although technology related to machine translation has been steadily advancing, evaluations of translation accuracy vary widely, and the use of machine translation may have a significant impact not only on the applicant but also on all users affected by the patent system. In other words, the use of machine translation should be done after careful consideration of the interests of applicants and third parties.

The purpose of this research study is to obtain the opinions of a wide range of users regarding the future handling of written applications in foreign languages as a material for determining the convenience for applicants and the possible disadvantages for third parties other than the applicant.

We hope that the opinions of users obtained through this survey and research will serve as material for considering the handling of foreign-language written applications.