Memory Based Translation: Using Translation Memory Tools, from a Freelancer's Perspective

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As Channel Development Manager for TRADOS, one aspect of my job is to ensure that TRADOS Freelance Edition 3.x meets the requirements and needs of the Freelance Translator and to this end it is vital that I am abreast of what other competitive tools are developing and implementing into their technology. In the enclosed paper I am going to discuss the concept of Translation Memory' and the benefits and hazards of use translation memory tools for Freelance Translators. I will also provide a brief overview of the main TM tools available on the market which have been specifically designed with the Freelance Translator in mind. To close I will present feedback from two well established translators, namely, *Danilo Nogueira & Galina Raff* who both use TRADOS Freelance Edition.

Paper Outline

⇒ What Is Translation Memory' technology?

⇒ What are the benefits of using a 'TM' tool?

⇒ What are the hazards of using a 'TM' tool?

=> Overview of primary TM tools available for Freelance

Translators.

What is Translation Memory technology?

'The same sentence never needs to be translated twice'

Using translation memory tools saves the Translator time and money and helps you deal more efficiently with all those repetitive texts instead of translating the same sentence all over again!

While the translator works away, the tool is busy building a linguistic database in the background. This is referred to as translation memory. Whenever the same or a similar phrase recurs, it automatically suggests the memorised translation as a possible match. The recycled text can be adopted, rejected or edited by the user.

What are the benefits of using a TM tool?

⇒ User friendly, typically one half day Training required.

⇒ Particularly beneficial when working with a lot of Repetitive text

⇒ Promotes consistency of Translation

⇒ Options : One large Translation Memory or several Translation Memories that can add too. Can start from scratch on each new project or leverage from existing TM.

⇒ Analysis : Can run an analysis at the beginning of a Translation project, useful for wordcount statistics etc...

TMX (Translation Memory Exchange): Can import & export other file formats, not restricted to one TM

What are the main things to watch out for?

• Spec required : min. recommended config. Is 100 MHz Pentium, 32 MB of RAM

• Number of TM tools now available, pick the right one for you?

- Ensure the tool you pick is stable, good functionality, easy to use, good on-line help & documentation, regular service releases, updates, good technical support options etc...

- Additional functionality required in order for Freelancers to do an effective translation?

- Sufficient levels of support for Freelancers using Translation Memory.

Competitive Overview- Translation Memory Tools

The enclosed are a list of the primary Translation Memory' tools which have been specifically designed with the Freelance Translator in mind:

- STAR Transit
- Atril's Deja-Vu
- SDL's SDLX
- TRADOS Freelance Edition 3.x

STAR

This German company specializes in multilingual processing and development including translation, terminology management, technical publishing, software localization and intemationalisation, software development and multimedia systems engineering. STAR markets the products detailed below.

TRANSIT

TRANSIT is a Translation Memory System with an Associative Network. It also includes TermStar - see details below. Transit is networkable. The Transit translation environment is not within a wordprocessor but instead within a split-screen editor.

Transit Light

This is a translation editor for additional workstations . It is the same as Full Version but without import/export features.

TermStar

This is a Terminology Management System for Windows. The product has an easy-to-use, "WYSIWYG" dictionary appearance. TermStar is networkable.

TermStar Light

This the same as the full version but with import/export features.

TermStar ViewStation

This is a subset version of TermStar that can be installed on any networked Windows PC allowing the user full reading access to your database. A single mouse-click starts a terminology search directly from within Microsoft Word, WordPerfect or AmiPro.

ATRIL- Deja-Vu

Déjà Vu is a powerful and customizable CAT system. This Barcelona based company is very active in the freelance market. A low cost price model, "famous" user support, and aggressive marketing on mailing lists makes it a firm favourite with Freelance Translators.

⇒ Project Management: Good project management facilities, multi-language, mutli translator projects make working in a group easier.

$\Rightarrow$ All in one package

- o Translation workbench.

- o Translation memory.

- o Alignment utility.

- o Terminology system accessible from any Windows application, not just from within Deja Vu.

SDLX

The UK based "globalization solution provider" managed to develop one of the most advanced competitive TM tools. SDLX 3.2 is an innovative Translation Memory tool, with a very competitive price tag.

$\Rightarrow$ New User Interface with project wizard

$\Rightarrow$ New Termbase, terminology management system.

TRADOS Freelance Edition 3.x

The TRADOS Translation Solution Freelance Edition is tailored to meet the many requirements of self-employed translators. This comprehensive package comprises all of the market-leading applications of the TRADOS Translation Solution, a suite of mature, proven products that enable you to effortlessly master the many facets of translation work:

$\Rightarrow$ Translation Memories: Save time & costs and deal more efficiently with all those repetitive texts instead of translating the same sentence all over again!

$\Rightarrow$ Editing: The translation memory database can be accessed from a wide variety of editing environments, such as MS Word and MS Powerpoint. The TRADOS Solution also includes an easy to use translation window for PowerPoint and a customised application for the effortless processing of SGML/HTML/XML formats

$\Rightarrow$ Publishing: TRADOS supplies a range of DTP interfaces for seamless connectivity with popular publishing solutions such as Framemaker, Interleaf, PageMaker, Quark and Ventura.

$\Rightarrow$ Alignment: Makes the most of existing resources and recycling legacy translation material for re use
by the translation memory.

$\Rightarrow$ Terminology: Easy to use terminology management system.

2 Freelancer Report's on using Translation Memory systems

This single-user suite lives up to its promises

"I first encountered TRADOS in the summer of 1998, in the course of investigating a possible translation project for a major manufacturer. One condition of this job was the need to use TRADOS software and Word 97. At this point all I knew about TRADOS software was that it was expensive.

I immediately searched the TRADOS Internet site — www.trados.com — and found it well organized and informative. TRADOS apparently does a fine job of assisting people looking for information: the Web site is useful, with good interactive tutorials, demo versions, downloadable manuals and various technical support and help information.

Within minutes I was able to download a fully functional demo version of Translator's Workbench and a tutorial. I installed and tested it to make sure there would be no surprises with non-Latin characters and that the program did what it promised. I was impressed by how it handled Cyrillic script. It seemed to be fully Unicode-based, relying on Unicode versions of Windows core fonts in places that traditionally use system fonts. In this way, Workbench can support many scripts without requiring additional utilities. Translator's Workbench is not difficult to learn — I found it easier to master than PageMaker. It didn't conflict with my Russian spell checker. Most importantly, it really sped up the translation process. I tried it on a sample text obtained from my potential employer and became convinced that the software had tremendous potential for certain translation projects.

The major drawback of Translator's Workbench in 1998 was its high cost, both in terms of software price and hardware requirements. After many years of targeting big companies that handle major translation projects and are not dissuaded by these drawbacks, TRADOS has decided to publish a less expensive Translator Solution Freelance Edition, whose only limitation is that it cannot be used over a computer network. Right now, the price is a small fraction of what it was last year. As for hardware, prices in general are falling so much that now even a relatively low-priced system is powerful enough to handle TRADOS effectively.

The Freelance Edition consists of several applications. MultiTerm 95 Plus! is an object-oriented database created to handle terminology management in up to 20 languages simultaneously. It provides up to 62 text fields to store supplemental information, as well as attribute fields. MultiTerm has a large number of pre-defined fields; indeed, everything I thought of had already been defined. Sorting order is defined for several languages, but can be modified. The pre-defined fields can also be modified. It was not difficult to type the Russian alphabet in the field that defined sorting order when I created a new dictionary. Any entry can be illustrated, and most graphic formats are supported. MultiTerm can be used as a separate application or in conjunction with Translator's Workbench. There is no limit to the number of terms that can be stored. Terms can be entered individually or imported after being put into a specified format.

As an experiment, I imported into MultiTerm one of the Microsoft English-Russian bilingual glossaries that I had downloaded from Microsoft's Web site. Using the clear directions in the MultiTerm manual, I opened a file in the word-processor, added field names and put the words in order. Once terminology has been placed in MultiTerm, it is easy to handle. For example, reversing language direction requires only two clicks of the mouse. MultiTerm includes a Word macro that makes it easy to print out lists of terms and professionally formatted glossaries. Double-clicking on a MultiTerm entry copies it onto the clipboard and/or an open Word document.

Translator's Workbench is a database of already translated sentences. It was developed to allow efficient reuse of previously translated material and has many practical features. The basic translation unit is a sentence that can be expanded if the translator decides to translate two source language sentences with one in the target language. Workbench allows automatic substitution of expressions such as numbers, measurements and user-defined variables. It can skip text defined by a user as "non-translatable." Localization of basic values such as data, time, decimal symbol and basic measurements conversion is also automated. An Analyse tool counts the number of exact and fuzzy matches in a file, while a Translate tool translates all segments known to the translation database.

Workbench works together with MultiTerm. Both support fuzzy matching. There is a useful Concordance function, which searches the translation database and finds all segments that include a selected word or word combination. Translator's Workbench's interface with MS Word is logical and effective, using a toolbar and drop down menus. Most functions have keyboard shortcuts, and some are available with right-button mouse menu.

Translator's Workbench can import and export translation database information in TMX format, the Translation Memory exchange standard adopted in 1998. Other importable file formats include IBM TM/2, Systran and Logos. Déjà Vu, a competing translation database application, has developed filters to import and export TRADOS native Workbench translation database files.

TagEditor is a basic text editor with added functionality. It has the standard Translator's Workbench interface and is used with Workbench when translating tagged (like HTML) files. Contrary to what its name implies, TagEditor's purpose is to prevent the translator from accidentally editing (altering) or deleting tags. TagEditor allows the editing of translatable text between tags and within tags and provides the option of several levels of tag protection and verification.

TagEditor allows various views of a file during translation: Edit view (bilingual), Source view and Target view. For Text and Preview views the TagEditor's window splits in half vertically, offering parallel views of the source and target language files. Preview is an Internet Explorer 4 view, although another browser such as Netscape can be specified. The views can be changed dynamically at any point. In the addition to the own format, the work can be saved as BIF (bilingual) file.

To test other TRADOS utilities — TRADOS Story Collector for PageMaker and ITP Filter Pack — I created a 3-page PageMaker file. Story Collector is a plug-in for PageMaker 6.5 that exports all text in PageMaker into one tagged file and imports an already translated tagged file that replaces the original stories with translated ones. Another plug-in, Story Order, alters the order in which stories are exported. Exported tagged PageMaker files are then processed with the ITP Filter Pack, which converts them into Workbench RTF for translation in Microsoft Word or TagEditor. Other formats supported by the ITP filter pack are Ventura, QXpress and HTML. While the translation of a PageMaker document via export, conversion, translation, another conversion (from Workbench RTF to a tagged PageMaker file) and import appears complicated at first glance, the steps are clearly defined in the documentation, and I succeeded on the first try. It would be more convoluted to export and place each story separately. Story Collector cannot export the text from the PageMaker master pages.

These TRADOS translation tools require a fairly powerful computer. The minimal recommended configuration is 100 MHz Pentium, 32 MB of RAM. A 17" or bigger monitor is recommended because it has to accommodate three applications that are kept open at the same time. I tested the software on a 266 MHz Pentium II with 64 MB of RAM and 17" Trinitron monitor and performance was robust. The user manual emphasizes the need for regular backups of translation memory files. The recommended hardware set-up doesn't include any high-capacity removable media (Zip, Jazz, SuperDisk, CD-RW), but in my opinion they would be helpful for archiving and sharing database files because a floppy is not likely to be big enough.

No difficulties were noted during installation. By default, both Translator's Workbench and MultiTerm install on the C: drive. Users with a partitioned hard drive or several hard drives might want to change the default installation path. I opted for a different location. Translator's Workbench automatically found both MS Word 7/95 and MS Word 97 on my computer and painlessly installed in both.

TRADOS software can be installed on any language version of Windows, and only a few languages (Japanese, Korean and Chinese) require a localized operating system. The user interface can be easily switched among English, German and French. The manuals and on-line help are well structured and superbly translated from German, which is an important requirement for a product created for translators.

Copy protection is implemented with a small hardware device called a security key or dongle. I plugged it into the parallel port and plugged the printer cable into it. While the manual has a chapter about Configuring Dongle Drivers, mine was automatically installed with the program.

Any computer program that attempts to support many languages in many operating systems is bound to have flaws. As of now, MultiTerm is not Unicode compatible. This means that the non-Latin terms cannot be copied from MultiTerm via the clipboard or Get Term function into Word 97. Word 95 came into existence before Unicode and is fully compatible with MultiTerm. Because fonts in MultiTerm are user-definable in both a free-stand mode and in conjunction with Workbench, MultiTerm always has a proper representation of non-Latin characters, and only the Copy/Paste function is affected. Thus, it can still be used for lookup. A new version of MultiTerm with Unicode support is expected to be released in the second quarter of 2000.

I couldn't perform the Concordance search in the Russian-English translation memory by typing a Russian word in the Tools/Concordance window. On the other hand, when I selected a Russian word in an open MS Word document and clicked on a Concordance button, it provided an instantaneous list of all translation memory records that included the selected word.

When I first installed the TagEditor, I couldn't edit a Russian HTML file from the keyboard. TRADOS technical support sent me a newer release to cure the problem. While editing became possible, the Russian text wasn't properly saved in translation memory - in some but not all records there were question marks instead of Cyrillic letters. For these reasons I do not feel that TagEditor can be used with European languages other than those supported by Code Page 1252. Still, I could successfully translate an HTML file in Word after converting it to Workbench RTF via the ITP Filter Pack. According to the message from TRADOS technical support, non-Latin scripts are fully supported under Windows NT.

TRADOS Translation Solution Freelance Edition will be useful to many translators. While large projects with highly repetitive material would be aided most, any translation job received in electronic form is suitable for Workbench. We all keep notebooks, folders and files of past translations to refer to in similar projects. The TRADOS tools offer a convenient way to collect terminology and translation memory in a system that ensures compact storage and reliable and easy retrieval. As the company's current ad says: Translator's Workbench never forgets".

—Galina Raff

Translating both ways

Danilo Nogueira (danilo.tradutor@uol.com.br)

Everybody knows translators should work only into their mother languages. You should tell that to my clients. My clients are CPAs, lawyers, tax consultants and they expect me to work with them as *project translator* not as *English → Portuguese translator.*

A *project,* in my area of activity as a professional translator, often involves translating inquiries received from abroad for the benefit of monolingual Brazilian professionals and then translating their responses into English for the benefit of foreign professionals who do not know Portuguese. In other cases, it involves a joint effort involving people in several different countries.

In special cases, a native speaker is asked to revise my translation. This is usually - but by no means not always - an expatriate partner. In the majority of cases, though, there is not even time to *think* about "revision by native speaker," for my client is already running behind schedule when the original reaches me for translation.

The following case is typical of a series of jobs in which professional translators are often involved. The fact that I worked on both directions may be interesting, but not necessarily relevant.

My client was one of the big CPA firms and they had to submit a bid for a large job. The bid had to be submitted in three languages: Portuguese for Brazil, English for the U.K. and Dutch

for the Netherlands. Contributions for the final bid were to be supplied by members of the client's staff in the three countries.

The process began in Brazil. I was given a text in Portuguese, to be translated into English, to be submitted to the steering committee for the proposal, in London, still in draft form.

In London, the texts were revised by professional writers, who made a series of changes. Some of those changes only improved my style; others however, deeply altered the content of the bid. In addition, the text received considerable additions from the London people, concerning the role their office would play in the job.

At the same time, several persons were busy in Amsterdam adding information and correcting details of content.

After two days, I received a "first draft" of the final text in English. My job was then to provide my client with an "updated" Portuguese text.

This is usually a nightmare, because the translator has to hunt for the changes and implement them. Not in this case, though. I simply created an English → Portuguese translation memory, exported my Portuguese → English memory as a text file and reimported it into the new database.

Then I ran the "first draft" through the new English → Portuguese database. TWB showed me all the changes and where they should be implemented in the translation. Where the change was merely an improvement in my English style, there was nothing to do but to keep it for later use if the occasion came. However, if the changes affected the contents, the Portuguese had to be amended accordingly. Obviously, much of the "first English draft" was exactly as I had done it and thus TWB gave me a 100% match.

As the English were doing their job, the Dutch were doing theirs and I received a "second and final draft" from London, incorporating the Dutch additions and the last changes made by the English editors even before I had completed my translation of the "first draft".

This type of thing is usually a double nightmare. But it was very simple. I simply abandoned the "first draft" and ran the second through the English -> Portuguese data base. Again, what the Dutch had changed was clearly shown in my screen and the corresponding changes in the Portuguese version were easy to make.

My client was surprised at how fast I could update the Portuguese text - and I now have a "native" text of the proposal, for future reference.

Summary

In conclusion I think that using Translation Memory products can have enormous benefits for Freelance Translator's. In addition to promoting consistency of translation, TM tools can save a lot of time, money and effort and eliminate the need to translate any sentence twice! The important thing to note is that you the Freelancer choose a tool that offers you flexibility, a friendly user interface, good functionality and technical support.