

BENEFITS OF USING ONE LARGE TRANSLATION MEMORY AND TRANSLATION MEMORY FIELDS

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Many (if not most) translators use several different translation memories, creating a separate memory for each client or subject. While there might be some good reasons for this approach in certain situations, it is much more efficient to use one large memory with attribute fields (such as “client” and “subject”). This allows you to utilize all of the previous translations you have done for other clients or subject matters.

Combining everything into one large memory does not have to be as tedious or messy as it sounds, just as long as you classify your translation units according to client, subject matter, project number and/or any other attribute or text field that you might find useful.

First we look at the different types of translation memory fields, their benefits, setup and use, and then we see how you can combine your individual memories into one larger main memory.

A. Types of Translation Memory Fields

The purpose of translation memory fields is to be able to label all translation units (TU) with pertinent information about the TU, such as a project number, subject and client’s name. These labels can then be used as **filter criteria** in translation memory maintenance (find & replace, export) and as **selection criteria** when searching translation memory during translation. They also allow you to have different translations for the same source segment if the translation memory field values are different, i.e. you can have two different translations in the same translation memory, one for client A and another one for client B.

There are two types of translation memory fields, namely **text fields** and **attribute fields**. An example of a text field could be a project number or another piece of information that is used only once. A project number is used only for that project. Attribute fields, on the other hand, will be used repeatedly later on with other projects. An example of an attribute field could be a subject (medical, legal, etc.) or client name (Client A, Client B, etc.). **Text Field** values are typed in when a new translation project is started. **Attribute Field** values are added in advance and then selected from a picklist when a new translation project is started.

B. Setting up text fields and their values (see Figure 1)

1. In Translator’s Workbench, select **File > Setup... > Fields**.
2. Select any field in the **Text fields** list. Click **Add**, and type a new name (such as **Project number**) into the **Field** input box. You now have a text field called *Project number*. Repeat this for additional text fields.
3. When you have added all fields click **OK** (do not click **Add** at this point anymore).

C. Setting up attribute fields and their values (see Figure 1)

1. In Translator's Workbench, select **File > Setup... > Fields**.
2. Select any field in the **Attribute fields** list. Click **Add**, and type a new name (such as **Subject**) into the **Field** input box. You now have an attribute field called *Subject*.
3. Select **Subject** in the **Attribute fields** list and then **A Value** from the **Attribute Values** list. Click **Add** and type a new name (such as *Medical*) into the **Field** input box (or overwrite "A Value" with your new value without clicking **Add**). You now have an attribute field called *Subject* containing one value called *Medical*. Add other values for *Subject*, as needed.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for additional attribute fields and their values that you want to set up. You can also add new fields and field values later at any time, as needed.
5. When you have added all fields and their values click **OK** (do not click **Add** at this point anymore).

D. Selecting the Appropriate Fields

The only downside to using attribute/text fields is that you have to remember to select the appropriate fields and their values before each new translation project. The selection is done as follows (see Figure 2):

1. In Trados Workbench, select **Settings > Project and Filter Settings**.
2. Select the appropriate text field and type its value into the **Text field content** box in the **Project Settings** tab. Repeat this for other text fields, as needed.
3. Select the appropriate attribute field and its values from the **Attribute picklist** in the **Project Settings** tab. Repeat this for other attribute fields, as needed.
4. Select filter settings for text and attribute fields in the **Filter Settings** tab. This is done exactly the same way as in steps 2 and 3 in the **Project Settings** tab. You can apply your project settings to your filter settings by clicking **Apply Current Project Settings** in the **Filter Settings** tab. Note the difference between project and filter settings:
 - a. **Project settings** define the fields and their values that will be added into each new TU.
 - b. **Filter settings** define the fields and their values that will be used as filters when searching the translation memory during translation.
5. You can get the **Project and Filter Settings** dialog box to appear automatically every time you open Trados or a new memory by selecting **Options > Translation Memory Options > General > Show project settings** (you need to do this only once). It is very helpful to activate this feature. Otherwise it is too easy to forget to change the settings when you start a new project. However, you need to remember to change your project and filter settings if you start working on another translation project without closing the translation memory or Trados Workbench because you will not get this reminder in those situations.
6. Also, always remember to verify your current project and filter settings before doing an analysis or clean up.

E. Using Attribute Fields

Attribute and text fields can be used as selection criteria when searching a translation memory during translation or when performing memory maintenance. For example, during translation, the **Attribute and text field differences penalty** option (**Options >**

Translation Memory Options > Penalties) gives priority to TUs that have the same attribute/text field values as your current project by penalizing (= lowering) the fuzzy match levels of all other TUs by two percentage points per field (this is the default value, so you do not need to do anything to set this up).

For utilizing attribute/text fields in concordance searches, you can select the **Apply current filter settings** option (**Options > Translation Memory Options > Concordance**) if you want to give a priority to TUs that have specific attribute/text field values. And as mentioned earlier, these fields can also be used while performing memory maintenance as filter criteria when you want to utilize find and replace operations or export a certain subset of your translation memory, for example (**File > Maintenance > Filter...**).

If you have never used attribute and text fields, it is worth spending a few minutes to figure out what type of a field structure would be most useful in your case. Two or three attribute fields could be enough, such as subject and client. Of course, you can add new fields and their values later, if needed.

F. Examples of Attribute Fields

Attribute field: Subject

Attribute values: Automotive, Computers, Software, Medical, Legal, Chemical, Business, [etc.]

Attribute field: Client

Attribute values: Trados, Computer Inc., Motor Corp., Syringe Inc., [etc.]

Attribute field: Agency

Attribute values: Agency1, Agency2, Company1, [etc.]

The **Attribute field** setup depends on your own preferences and the types of materials you translate.

G. How To Combine Several Smaller Memories into One Main Memory

If you have been using several client- or subject-specific memories you might want to think about combining them into one large main memory to get the full benefit of all the previously translated material.

1. Add appropriate attribute fields to each of the small memories, if they are not already included. If your memories are client- or subject-specific it should be quite easy to come up with the suitable fields and their values. First add attribute fields and their values into the setup if they are not already set. Go to **File > Setup... > Fields** (see *Setting up attribute fields and their values* above).
2. Add the fields and their values to the TUs (**File > Maintenance... > Find and Replace... > Attribute Fields: > Attribute Picklist: > Merge > OK > Begin Search > Change**).
3. Export each small memory into a txt file (**File > Export...**).

Open your main memory and import each txt file into the main memory (**File > Import...**). Select **Existing translation units > Merge** and **New fields > Add to setup > OK**.

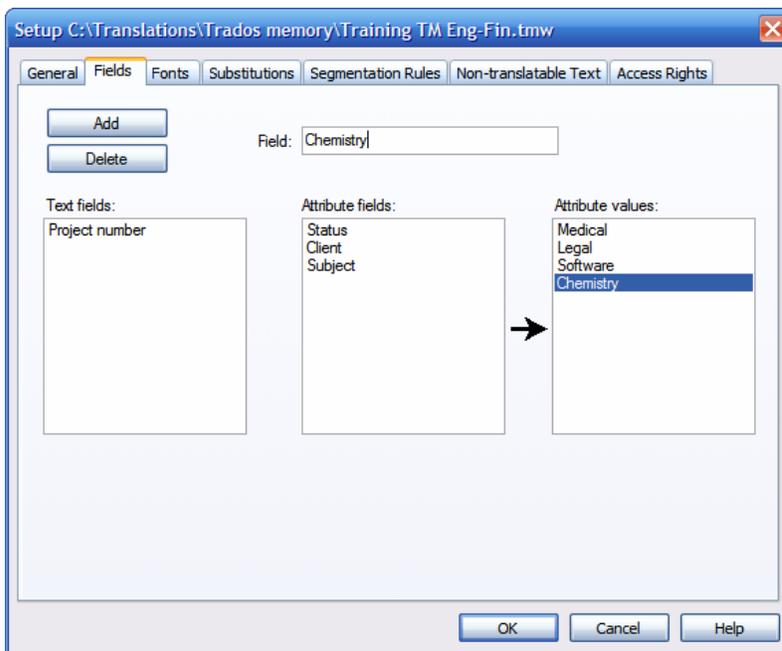


Figure 1. Setting up Text and Attribute Fields.

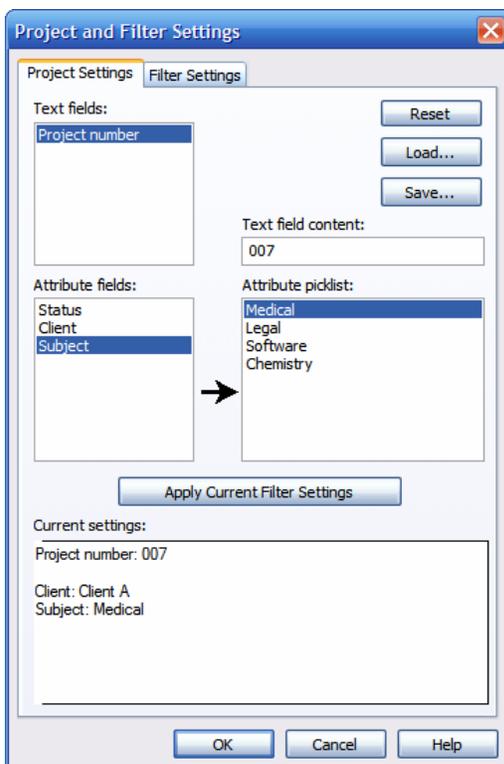


Figure 2. Project and Filter Settings dialog box for selecting project settings.