

January 2007
Volume XXXVI
Number 1
A Publication
of the
American
Translators
Association

The *ata* CHRONICLE



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Picking Berries With TRADOS

By Tuomas Kostiainen

Using TRADOS is like

picking berries in a Finnish forest. If you know the forest and where to find the best berry patches, you will do fine and get a lot of berries in no time without getting lost. However, if you do not know your way around or even what to look for, you will end up without berries, frustrated, lost, or perhaps even worse, harassed by a bear. Rather than risk this plight, many choose to stay close to the forest's edge, making do with the berries they find there.

While teaching TRADOS workshops and providing one-on-one training, I have noticed that many translators tend to stay within the periphery of the first useful functions they encounter, unsure of how to venture into what they perceive as a forest of options to get to the more advanced features TRADOS has to offer (the very best berry patches). “Oh, I don't know where to go,” or “I can't read the map,” they say. I realize that as a trainer, my job is not to teach everything that TRADOS does, but to tell workshop participants about the best berry patches and draw a useful map so that everyone can get there and back, directly and safely. So, here is my collection of some of the best features TRADOS has to offer, along with a map for finding them.

Memory or Memories?

Many (if not most) translators use several different translation memories (TMs), creating a separate memory for each client or subject. While there might be some good reasons for this approach in certain situations, I find it

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,

the “Attribute and Text Field Differences Penalty” option in TRADOS (Options > Translation Memory Options > Penalties) gives priority to TUs that have the same

Having a large number of client- or subject-specific memories defeats, to some extent, one of the main purposes of using a TM tool like TRADOS.

or those covering a particular subject.

Having a large number of client- or subject-specific memories defeats, to some extent, one of the main purposes of using a TM tool like TRADOS. Some programs, such as Déjà Vu, allow you to use several memories at the same time, but TRADOS does not (except for concordance searches, which I will explain later). Combining everything into one large memory does not have to be as messy as it sounds, just as long as you classify your translation units (TUs) according to client, subject matter, project number, and/or any other attribute or text field you might find useful.

Using Attribute Fields

Attribute and text fields (together called TM fields) can be used as selection criteria when searching a TM during a translation or when performing memory maintenance. How, you ask? Just bear with me while I take you a little deeper into the forest—it should all make sense in a minute.

For example, during translation,

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).

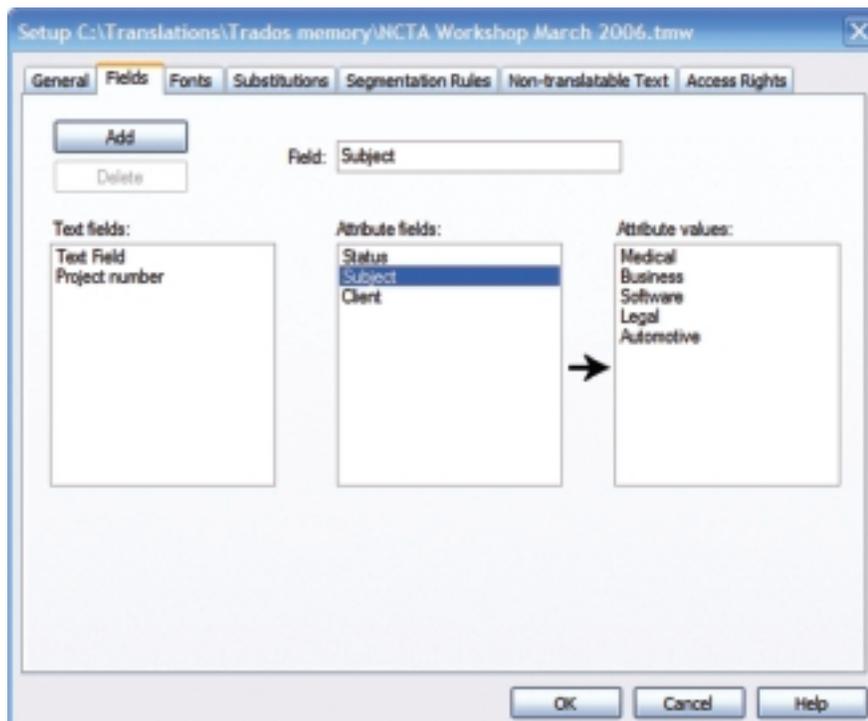
For utilizing attribute/text fields in concordance searches, you can select the “Apply Current Filter Settings” option (Options > Translation Memory Options > Concordance) if you want to give a priority to TUs that have specific attribute/text field values. And as I mentioned earlier, these fields can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

Here is an example of how to set up attribute fields and their values (see Figure 1):

1. In TRADOS Workbench, select “File > Setup... > Fields.”



Figure 1: Fields tab open for adding text fields and attribute fields and their values.



2. Select any field in the “Attribute Fields” list.
3. Click “Add” and type a new name (such as “Subject”) into the “Field” input box. You now have a field called “Subject.”
4. Select “Subject” in the “Attribute Fields” list and then “A Value” from the “Attribute Values” list.
5. Click “Add” and type a new name (such as “Medical”) into the “Field” input box. You now have an attribute field called “Subject” containing one value called “Medical.” Repeat this for additional fields and their values.
6. When you have added all fields and their values, click “OK” (do not click “Add” at this point anymore).

Using Text Fields

Text fields function differently, in the sense that you set only the text fields but not their values in advance, and then write the needed value in the “Project and Filter Settings” dialog box (see Figure 2). 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, but a subject name (= attribute field) will be used every time you translate for that subject.

If you have not yet used attribute and text fields, it is worth spending a few minutes to figure out what type of 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.

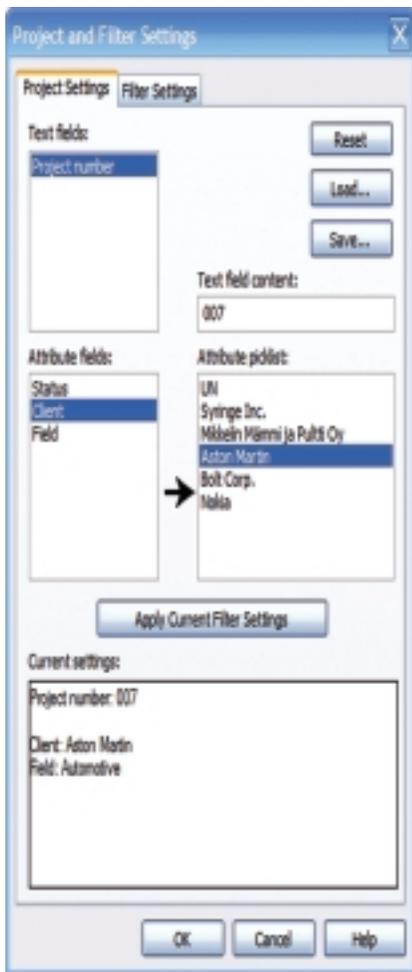
Selecting the Appropriate Fields

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 project. The selection is done as follows (see Figure 2):

1. In TRADOS Workbench, select “Settings > Project and Filter Settings.”
2. Select appropriate attribute/text fields and their values for project settings *and* filter settings. Note the difference between the two:
 - Project settings define the fields and their values that will be added into each new TU.
 - Filter settings define the fields and their values that will be used as filters when searching the TM during translation.
3. 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).
4. Remember to change your project and filter settings if you start working on another translation project without closing the TM or TRADOS.
5. Also, remember to verify your current project and filter settings before doing an analysis or clean up.

Sounds like a hassle? Yes, a little, but it pays off quickly. It is like using mosquito repellent in the woods—a hassle, yes, but you will be happy you did.

Figure 2. Selecting project and filter settings for a translation project before starting a translation. Selected fields and their values are listed in the “Current settings” box.



Segmentation Rules

TRADOS uses so-called segmentation rules to segment the source text. By default, segmentation rules are based on punctuation marks so that a segment is normally equivalent to one sentence. This works fine in most situations, and one rarely needs to bother with these rules. However, there are situations where adjusting them slightly can make your work much more efficient.

Using Stop Characters: I have translated numerous ingredient lists for various products (pet food, nutritional supplements, etc.) where each list often includes pretty much the same ingredients, but in a different order. If you translate these lists using default segmentation rules, each list is treated as one translation unit, and you end up translating each ingredient again and again without benefitting from your previous translation. However, if you include a comma or semicolon (depending on which one is used to separate the ingredients on the list) as a “stop character,” you can translate these lists ingredient by ingredient. As a result, by the time you start working on the second ingredient list, you will get many 100% matches. You will also not have to figure out how to translate “partially hydrolyzed organic Baltic herring liver oil” or retype it again (see Figure 3).

Changing Segmentation Settings: To change the settings, go to “File > Setup... > Segmentation Rules.” You can either create a new category for your stop character (such as a comma or semicolon) or just add it under “Marks” together with the question mark and exclamation point that are already there. The “Segmentation Rules” dialog box might look a bit confusing, but do not be too afraid to play with it. With the Reset “panic button” you can easily reset the default settings, and no harm has been done.

Overriding Segmentation Settings: One easy but often overlooked feature you can use during translation to override the segmentation rules is the “Expand Segment” (Ctrl+Alt+Page down) or “Shrink Segment” (Ctrl+Alt+Page Up) command. This is very handy when you want to translate two source sentences as one target

sentence or when TRADOS does not recognize a period at the end of a sentence as a segmentation mark (because there is a number or unknown abbreviation right before the period). In such situations, the segment that is opened for translation consists of two sentences. You can expand or shrink a segment by repeatedly selecting the respective command as many times as you need to, and the segment expands/shrinks each time to the next/previous segmentation mark.

In Love With the New TRADOS MultiTerm

If you got frustrated with MultiTerm Version 5 and have not tried it since, you should take a look at the newer version of iX or 7. The new versions are much easier to use, and they have made it very simple to add new terms to a MultiTerm glossary directly from Word or TagEditor while translating. I use this often to add long product names to a glossary—not so much to build a long-term glossary, but to make it easy to copy these long names into my translation with a simple “Alt+Arrow” keyboard command without having to retype the entire name.

Another handy idea is to maintain a termbase of common long words and expressions, such as “turn right,” “counterclockwise,” and “immediately.” This could be used for the same purpose as MS Word’s AutoCorrect function (see the article by Clifford Landers in the June 2006 issue of *The ATA Chronicle*, pages 26-28), but the nice thing about this is that you do not have to memorize anything, because MultiTerm remembers the terms for you.

Converting your old MultiTerm 5, Word, or Excel glossaries to MultiTerm 7 termbases is still a much more complicated process than it should be. However, it is not dif- ➡

Figure 3. Segmentation Rules tab open for adjusting segmentation rules. Here, a comma has been added as a “stop character” in the “Marks” category to allow translation from comma to comma.

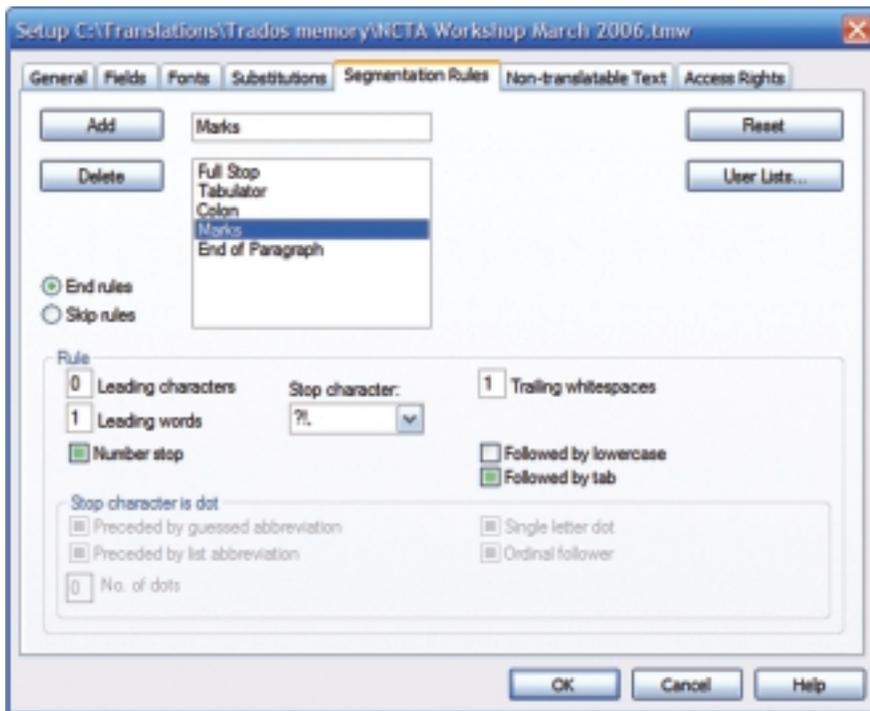
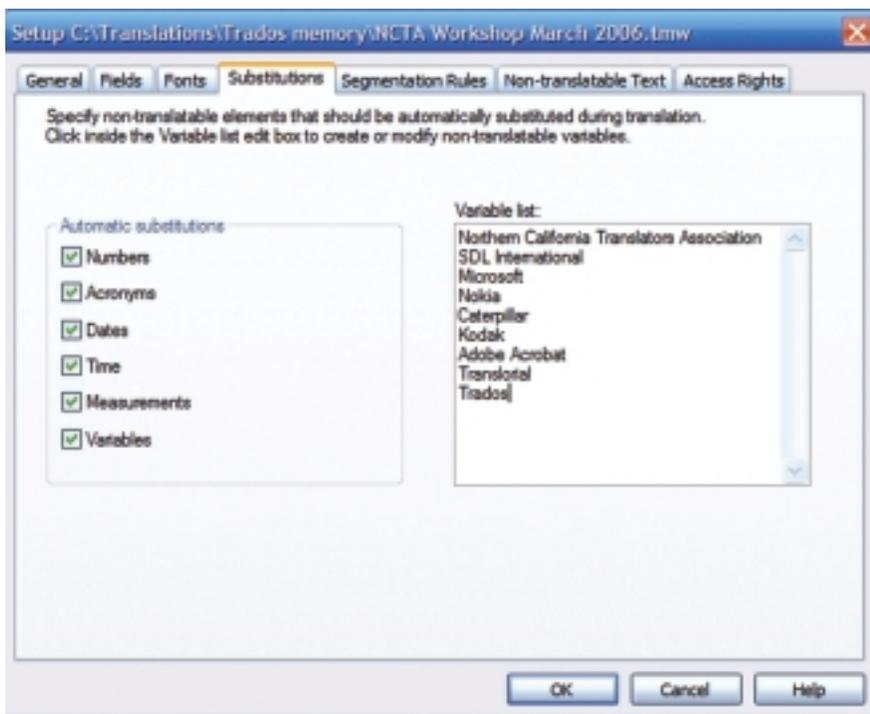


Figure 4. Substitutions tab open for selecting automatic substitutions. Variable names in the “Variable list” will be treated as placeables during translation.



difficult if you know what to do. In case you do not, you can download my *Quick Guide to MultiTerm iX/7* from www.finntranslations.com/trados/help.html. It includes simple, straightforward instructions on how to convert and exchange glossaries and how to add terms directly from Word and TagEditor to a MultiTerm termbase (i.e., the basics you need to know in order to use MultiTerm efficiently with TRADOS).

Substitutions

In addition to the default substitution of numbers, dates, and measurements, TRADOS also offers two non-default substitution possibilities (see Figure 4).

Acronyms Substitution: The “Acronyms Substitution” setting (File > Setup... > Substitutions > Acronyms) becomes handy when you are working, for example, on software or hardware interface instructions where software commands or names of buttons and switches are written all in capital letters and do not need to be translated. When “Acronyms” is selected on the “Substitutions” tab, TRADOS treats all words written in caps as placeables, and substitutes them automatically. For example, “Select SEGMENTATION RULES Tab” would be a 100% match after “Select ACCESS RIGHTS Tab” has been translated.

Variables Substitution: The other substitution option that everyone should be using is called “Variables” (File > Setup... > Substitutions > Variables). With this you can define words that do not need to be translated, such as proper names, by adding them to the “Variable List” box. All of these words will then be treated as placeables during translation, and it is very

easy to add them to the text using the “Add Placeable” commands without ever again having to retype them.

Not Fuzzy Enough

You just translated a similar sentence or phrase, but cannot figure out why it will not come up as a fuzzy match. Try lowering your “Minimum Match Value %” setting from the default 70% down to 50% or 40%. These lower level fuzzy matches often include useful phrases and terms. You will also get some useless matches, but they do not cost you anything—you can just ignore them. To change the setting, select “Options > Translation Memory Options > General.”

Using Reference TM for Concordance Searches

As I mentioned earlier, TRADOS allows you to have only one TM open at a time for translation, but you can use a second memory for concordance searches. Reference (read-only) memory for concordance is a handy way to utilize a second TM. You can set TRADOS so that every concordance search is also done in the reference translation memory in addition to the active translation memory. If you select “Search First in Reference Translation Memory,” the search is done first in the reference TM and then in the active TM (if there were no hits in the reference TM). Otherwise, the search is done first in the active TM. To select the reference TM and change the setting, select “Options > Translation Memory Options > Concordance.”

Microsoft Glossaries

If you have been reading Jost Zetzsche’s excellent *Tool Kit* newsletter (www.internationalwriters.com), you know about the new arrangement with Microsoft glossaries. The application-specific “glossaries,” which were more

Useful Links

www.apsic.com
ApSIC Xbench: for searching and viewing bilingual files, such as MS glossaries.
ApSIC Comparator: for comparing edited and unedited files, such as TagEditor files.

www.finntranslations.com/tradoshelp.html
Quick Guide to MultiTerm iX/7, along with other workshop and presentation handouts.

www.globalready.com
MSGloss2TWB for converting MS glossaries to TRADOS TM.

www.internationalwriters.com
Jost Zetzsche’s *Tool Kit* newsletter.

www.microsoft.com/globaldev/tools/MILSGlossary.msp
The new Microsoft terminology translations link.

<http://sdl.custhelp.com>
The SDL/TRADOS support page.

like translation memories, have been replaced by a real glossary of 9,000 English terms, plus their translations in up to 45 different languages. The previous glossary files are now available only to paying subscribers, so do not lose your old files if you still have them.

I have often been asked how to use Microsoft glossaries with TRADOS and MultiTerm. Here are some suggestions.

First, convert those old glossary files into a TRADOS TM. One simple way to do it is through a free utility called MSGloss2TWB (www.globalready.com). Depending on the language, this memory can have hundreds of thousands of TUs and can be very useful if you translate any soft-

ware-related texts. This is one of the few memories I keep separate from my main TM, and I use it often as a reference memory for concordance searches.

Unfortunately, the MSGloss2TWB program does not have an option to include attribute fields in the resulting memory, but you can add them quite easily in TRADOS using the “Find and Replace” function.

1. First, you need to set up the fields and their values if they do not already exist in the memory, as described earlier (see Figure 1).
2. Go to “File > Maintenance...> Find and Replace > More,” select the attribute field(s) and the ➡

value(s) you want to add from the picklist(s).

3. Select "Merge" and click "OK."
4. Select "Begin Search" to view the first few TUs that will be changed.
5. Select "Change" and "All Translation Units."

If you want to test your find and replace operation, select the "Translation Units in Current List" option instead. That way the change will only be applied to those TUs in the list, and you can verify the effect of the operation before applying it to the entire memory. You can also do this with a set of proper find and replace commands in a good text editor (such as UltraEdit), or even in Word (Notepad is too slow for this) before importing the .txt files to a TM.

Another handy and equally cheap way to utilize these files is another free utility called ApSIC Xbench

(www.apsic.com). It does not allow you to import the files into a TRADOS TM, but it provides a powerful and convenient way to search and view bilingual information, such as the old Microsoft glossary files, outside of TRADOS.

The old Microsoft glossary files are not suitable for use in MultiTerm because they mostly consist of whole sentences or paragraphs of text. MultiTerm needs a proper glossary of terms or short phrases. Years ago, the Microsoft glossary package used to include a "Glossary of Standard Terms" of over a thousand general terms, which made it a very useful source for a MultiTerm glossary. However, this file has not been a part of the package for many years. Maybe you still have it from some old download. The file name is xx_stand.csv ("xx" indicates a language code). Anyhow, the new free 9,000-term glossary file also suits this purpose very well, but you might first want to delete all the languages you do not

need to make the conversion faster. The conversion is done with MultiTerm Convert and by selecting Excel as the source file type. You can find detailed instructions in my *Quick Guide to MultiTerm iX/7*.

In and Out of the Woods

I hope these few suggestions and examples have given you the courage and knowledge to venture deeper into the TRADOS environment and start picking even juicier and bigger berries. If, in spite of it all, you end up getting lost, remember that every TRADOS dialog box has a "Help" button that opens online help for that particular dialog box. Just stay calm and read the instructions. The bears? Yes, they are out there, but do not worry. Just play dead, or are you supposed to run away, or is it act big and aggressive...? Hmm, I need to check on that.

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