TRANSLATION

What, When, How

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- Degree in translation (Chinese/Japanese, Computational Linguistics)
- 1997-2000 Trados training and support specialist in Japan, Germany and the U.S.
- Since October 2000, independent trainer and consultant, also supplying technical support to users of Trados and memoQ. Based in Bonn, Germany.

WHAT

- Translation as an afterthought
  - Oh, right, we need to translated
    - website
    - documentation
    - installation guide
    - contracts
    - terms and conditions
    - user interface
    - online help
    - packaging material
    - …

WHEN

- ⦿ We need the translation
  - ⦿ Now, because we will show/release the product next week/tomorrow…

HOW

- Hey, didn't Joe from marketing spend his last holiday in the UK, in Germany, in Italy…?
- Why not ask him to do the translation?

Ways to go

- Internal resources
  - People who can speak another language
    - Pro: they know the product.
    - Con: speaking another language does not mean they can translated (written language, correct grammar, non-colloquial expression…).
  - People who come from another country
    - Pro: They know the other language.
    - Con: The longer you live in a foreign country, the less your mother tongue reflects the actual use of the language in the other country.

Ways to go

- Automation
  - Automated translation
    - Pro: fast and available through the internet.
    - Con: if you do not know the language you let the system translate into, you might generate some very funny or meaningless texts.
    - Machine translation only works well for documents that were written with machine translation in mind.
  - Building your own machine translation system (open-source software)
    - Pro: you have the control over the machine.
    - Con: Even with open-source resources, you will still have to invest a lot of time and man-hours into the project.

Ways to go

- ○ Crowdsourcing
  - ○ The user base translates for you
    - ○ Pro: If the users are enthusiastic about your product, crowdsourcing can be a real help.
    - ○ Con: But the users probably don't know your product yet or if they do, are there enough users prepared to do a translation?
    - ○ Con: a crowd needs to be managed as well and even if you don't pay them money they want to have some kind of recognition.

Ways to go

- Students
  - Partner up with universities or language schools to give the students some real-life experience
    - Pro: No or small money involved.
    - Con: Students need more guidance (company terminology, introduction to the product and the competitors).
    - Con: Without quality control from your side, the project might go well or not well at all.

Ways to go

- Professional translators
  - Translators usually use the technologies available
    - Translation tools
    - Machine translation
    - Online dictionaries
    - Internet for research into product…

Ways to go

- ○ Professional translators
  - ○ Pro: professionals give feedback on your documents and any issues or errors in the source – that way you can improve your source texts.
  - ○ Pro: professionals can help you plan the translation cycle as they know how long things take.
  - ○ Con: They do not come for free and you will have to spend time and effort to build up a working relationship.

Ways to go

- What you can do to make translation less costly
  - Spend some time on the words and expressions you use in your documents and list them.
  - List the words that should not be used together with your product (because the competition is using them, because they convey the wrong idea…).
  - Build up a relationship with a translator or translation vendor company.
  - A translation is as valuable as the source text itself – it helps get you customers or keep customers.

Ways to go

- What you can do to make translation less costly
    - Translators and their tools are not stupid – not everything has to be copied to a Word file to be translatable.
    - Let them show you how your files can be translated, be it Word, FrameMaker, InDesign, XML, software files with UI strings etc.

Continuous translation

- Translation is an integral part of a product life cycle, like creating a specification or buying the ingredients/parts for your product.
- Give it the same amount of attention as any other part of production – that way you can do continuous translation, because it has been planned in at the beginning and does not have to be added as an afterthought.

Translation tool that shows the source text (left) and the translation (right).

- Sentences can be locked so that the translator does not touch them.
- A match value shows that a similar sentence has been translated before.
- Segments can be reviewed by different users (one checkmark = translator; two checkmarks = reviewer).
- Comments can be attached to the sentences.
- Repeated sentences are translated automatically.
- As sentence can be set to "rejected" by the reviewer and will go back to the translator.

Thank you for your attention

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