

the e-book for translators

Translation Tools:

How to make the best of them?

PART 1

CAT Tools, QA Tools & Captioning

acolad.

COMMUNITY





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CAT Tools

FOR DUMMIES



CAT is an acronym for computer aided translation. As its name indicates, these are software tools that “aid” translators with their translations.

CAT tools work using a translation memory which saves all the content and uses it to ensure consistency in future translations.

The text to be translated is divided into segments by the tool and if the memory contains a complete match (100% match) or partial match (fuzzy match), the translation will appear and it can be checked and modified if necessary.

Other than the translation memory, CAT tools also use termbases. Long, tiresome searches for terminology can now be a thing of the past, as the glossary can be integrated into the tool, which flags if a term is present in the text.

For quality control, CAT tools have functionality to provide warnings of omissions, errors with numbers, inconsistencies and if the glossary has not been followed. Most of these tools also allow you to personalise these checks, thanks to the use of regular expressions. They are interesting for translators and post-editors who want to go further in their work with CAT tools because they allow them to search for all occurrences of a specific sequence of characters.

Going further with the dragon

Dragon NaturallySpeaking is a very high performance voice recognition software used by many translators to improve their productivity.

Dragon's range of features is vast. In fact, not only does it enable voice recognition, but it also makes it possible to use a certain number of voice commands to carry out common actions that are usually done with the mouse or using keyboard short cuts (copy-paste, delete, ormatting, etc.).

For further personalisation, Dragon can also facilitate the voice recognition of acronyms and complex terms by adding them directly to the software's dictionary.

Thanks to its compatibility with other CAT tools, there is no need to use several work environments.

And to limit the number of clicks, it is possible to create commands to carry out tasks such as moving to the next segment or adding a term to the termbase.

Functionalities

	Studio	Memsources	MemoQ
Alignement	✓	✓	✓
Auto-propagation during translation	✓	✓	✓
Automatic integration of translated/proofread files	✗	✓	✓
Automatic notification when your task in the workflow is ready/can be started	✗	✓	✓
Contextual view of source document in Editor view	✓	✓	✓
Double column/bilingual review	✓	✓	✓
Forbidden terms/client rules	✓	✓	✓
Grammar check	✓	✗	✓
Machine Translation	✓	✓	✓
Opening multiple documents for translation/proofreading	✓	✓	✓
Project Translation memory	✓	✓	✓
QA Checker	✓	✓	✓
Read-only Translation memory	✓	✓	✓
Running the QA Checker is obligatory otherwise translator/proofreader cannot deliver the document	✓	✓	✓
Segment/word count status bar	✓	✓	✓
Single view Translation memory/Term base results	✗	✓	✗
Spellchecker	✓	✓	✓
Tag management	✓	✓	✓
Term base update	✓	✓	✓
Term base view	✓	✓	✓
Translation memory automatic update by translators/proofreaders	✗	✓	✓
Translation memory contextual search	✓	✓	✓
Translation memory update	✓	✓	✓
Translation memory view	✓	✓	✓
Working with track changes in Editor view	✓	✓	✓

What You Can/Cannot Do

What can be checked?

The settings and possible checks vary from one tool to the other but all of them can be divided into 3 categories:

Consistency and completeness

- Check that 2 source segments have 2 different target translations.
- Check that identical source segments always have the same translation.
- Check the length of the target segment compared to the source one.

Terminology

- For a source segment containing a source term from a previously loaded bilingual termbase or dictionary, check that the target segment contains the corresponding target term.
- Check that no forbidden terms were used and that a Do Not Translate list was respected.

Punctuation/typography and tags

- Check that appropriate spacing and typographic rules were used for the target language (spacing before/after punctuation marks, usage of appropriate quotes and apostrophes, capitalization, leading and trailing spaces, localization of numbers and measurements).
- Check that appropriate formatting or conditional tags were used.

What is it?

A Quality Assurance (QA) tool is meant to simplify and automate a list of predefined checks on a bilingual file (translated file or translation memory export).

As these checks are **automated**, translators can then focus their attention on linguistic aspects that cannot be checked by a machine (wording, meaning).

How it works

The tool is run on a given file or batch of files according to user-defined settings. It generates a result log flagging potential mistakes that can be directly corrected by the translator or exported.

According to Best Practices, the QA tool should be used by the translator at the end of the translation step and by the reviewer at the end of the reviewing step.

For post-editing jobs, it can be useful to run the QA tool ahead of the post-editing step (to quickly identify and correct recurring errors) and then again at the end, before delivery.

Most CAT tools have their own integrated QA tool. Independent tools such as QA Distiller and Xbench can also work in standalone mode.

How to handle terminology

Terminology is key in translation and probably the hardest part of a translator's job.

Terminology work aims at getting the proper meaning of a source term in a specific context and finding the appropriate equivalent in the target language. This requires some efforts and complex research, but it's worth it because it saves time in the long term, improves consistency and the overall quality of the translation, so makes our lives easier in the end.

Here are some tips to help you make the most of terminology management.

There are different ways to manage terminology: from a simple term list in Excel to complex termbases which are built into CAT tools.

Using a termbase has many advantages compared to using a glossary in an Excel worksheet. You benefit from automatic term suggestions so you can feed the termbase with new terms from within the translation environment, and you can easily detect terminology errors with automatic Quality Assurance checks.

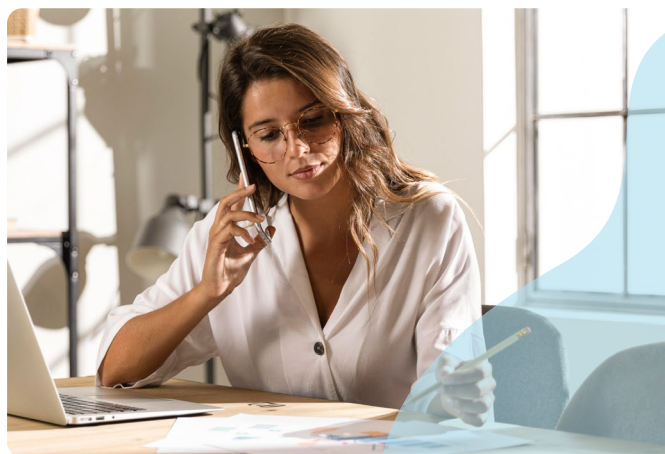
It's good practice to record terms (nouns, verbs, adjectives) in their basic format, i.e. singular, lower case (with the obvious exceptions), infinitive.

Some termbases include case-sensitivity and concordance settings to improve term suggestions and reduce the number of false positives in QA checks

You might want to add **metadata** for some concepts/terms, such as context, part of speech, etc. One common error here is to add additional information in brackets beside the term. This prevents the term suggestion from working properly.

If you want to note additional you should add this in the **fields of attributes** in your termbase. Depending on the termbase, there may be many fields available but, in most cases, you are only likely to use a few.

One interesting field is the definition field, especially when you need to disambiguate terms (such as homographs, i.e. terms with the same spelling that express different concepts).



You might happen to deal with different terms expressing the same concept, in other words, **synonyms** (including but not limited to acronyms and full forms). The most common error in handling synonyms is to write them all together, separated by a slash, comma, semicolon, etc. This will prevent term suggestion and QA checks from working properly.

All synonyms of the same concept should be collated in the same entry as single terms. If you have synonyms in the target language, it's a good idea to add some information to clarify when each term should be used. Most termbases allow for a **usage attribute** such as **preferred**, **allowed**, etc. As an alternative, you can add a note regarding the usage preference for each synonym.

Among synonyms, you might have **forbidden terms**. If a term was rejected (by the customer or by yourself), it's good practice not to delete it from the glossary, but to set it as forbidden instead. This way the QA check will detect any use of a forbidden term in the translation. This will also prevent the same term from being included again in the termbase in the future. Most termbases allow for a **forbidden attribute**.

Non-translatable terms can also be included in a termbase, this will help you detect any incorrect usage. However, some CAT tools manage lists of non-translatable terms, if this feature is available in your CAT tool, then you should use it.

Subtitling for Corporate Videos



Claire Culliford has been working as a translator, subtitler (audiovisual translator) and translation lecturer for 16 years.

Working from French, Spanish and German into English, she completed an MSc in Medical, Scientific and Technical Translation at Imperial College, London. She had also completed other shorter translation specific courses, including ones on CAT Tools, audiovisual translation technology and subtitling.

Claire Culliford

Is specialized training required for subtitling, or is it learned “on the job”? Are there any “options,” specialties in translation, or even communication schools?

Claire: I believe that formal training can be really beneficial for subtitling, owing to the restrictions it involves (in

terms of timings and words permitted per subtitle). The professional industry also now uses specific software for audiovisual translation, subtitling and captioning. These can be learned and their use practised on a formal course, with guidance and feedback from teachers and professional subtitlers who have a lot of industry experience. There

is a significant amount of creativity involved in subtitling at times. It is something of an art form and again, assistance and support from those with the right knowledge and expertise can be invaluable for honing the skill.

At most of the universities where I have worked, there are optional modules in audiovisual translation or subtitling. I have lectured for almost 10 years at Leeds University where there is a dedicated Masters course in Audiovisual Translation. Similar courses are available at other universities.

“ The ability to paraphrase is key, as is creativity and problem-solving using language.”

What skills do you require for subtitling? Are more specific ones required for corporate videos?

C: Subtitling requires both excellent comprehension of the source audiovisual material and a very sound ability to manipulate the target language. The ability to prioritise essential information in the source audiovisual is vital, as subtitle limitations mean that often elements of information

need to be omitted. The ability to paraphrase is key, as is creativity and problem-solving using language.

Corporate videos generally require the above skills. They also often require a formal level of language, so knowledge of this and the ability to use it consistently throughout a set of subtitles is very important.

What are the clichés about subtitling? What role do corporate videos play in subtitling?

C: I think that some people believe that subtitling involves putting the words someone is saying on screen into written format (whether in the source or a target language). With certain types of captioning (for example, for the deaf and hard of hearing) this can be more the case, as the generally accepted rules and standards are slightly different to those for intralingual translation.

With the latter, a simple literal translation of what a speaker is saying on screen is not possible and often people are not aware of the skill involved in condensing what is being said but ensuring a grammatically correct, authentic sounding subtitle which conveys the essential information required for the audience to understand the meaning of the source material.

What tool, application or software do you use for subtitling corporate videos?

C: I have used a number of pieces of software for this purposes. These include Wincaps, Aegisub, Swift, Spot and EZTitles.

Are there specific steps to follow for subtitling a video, for example, a corporate video?

C: Generally, the subtitles need to be spotted first, which means creating them so that they match the start and end times of the speech in the audiovisual material. This must be done using the appropriate standards (including max and min subtitle durations and so on). Then the subtitle text is created. This involves condensing and translating the meaning of the speech.

With a corporate video, it is very important to consult the client to ensure that any specific terminology they use in their company is used appropriately in the subtitles. And if they have any stylistic requirements, these need to be incorporated too. Generally, there will be liaison between subtitler, agency and end client throughout the process so any queries can be resolved.

What are the main advantages and difficulties of subtitling?

C: The main benefits of subtitles are the ability to convey information in audiovisual material to a much wider audience. Subtitles are also useful because they are a relatively short, succinct way of conveying this information, which is easily accessible to the audience.

In terms of difficulties, the constraints places on subtitle creation (duration, number of characters per line etc.) are often the main issue. They make it more challenging in some ways

than conventional translation. The technology tools involved in subtitling can also take some time to master when first starting to use them.

What elements do you need to use to guarantee high-quality subtitling, regarding the threat of automatic subtitling, “amateur” subtitling and pirates?

C: To guarantee high quality subtitling, a native speaker of the target language needs to be used, preferably a professional with training in and/or experience of subtitling.

The generally accepted subtitle standards also need to be adhered to (for example, duration and characters per line). It is also advisable to use professional subtitling software to produce the best quality subtitles. They can help especially with things like error checking and ensuring consistency.

If you had one piece of advice (or more) to give to freelance translators who would like to do subtitling, what would it be?

C: I would definitely suggest taking at least some form of course on the subject. This is a way of rapidly gaining knowledge and being able to practise whilst receiving feedback to help improve and develop the skill. I would also get as much experience as possible and sites such as YouTube now enable subtitlers to access to plenty of content which is suitable for subtitling.

Reference Sites & Tools for Translators

Sketch Engine

[View website >](#)

Sketch Engine is a corpus management and content analysis system.

Diffchecker

[View website >](#)

A website that compares two texts and highlights their differences. It also works with PDFs and Excel files.

Regular Expressions

[View website >](#)

A website that helps you create your own regular expressions and optimize the CAT tools' automatic checks.

Proz

[View website >](#)

Proz also provides a resource for terminology searches, given by translators who are mostly professionals.

Search/Replace in Word

[View website >](#)

Learn all about the Search/Replace function!

Symboles clavier

[View website >](#)

All the ALT keyboard shortcuts.

Acronym Finder

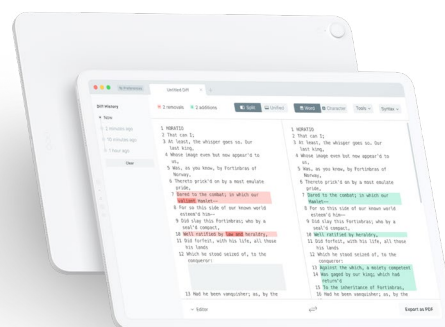
[View website >](#)

Ideal for finding acronyms.

EU job titles

[View website >](#)

Translation of all the civil servant job titles in the EU.



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