

Original Research Article

SDL Trados and Tmxmall: A Comparative Study of Computer-Aided Translation Tools

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Abstract: Technological development has brought about a series of changes, including influences on the traditional translation industry which is unable to meet the future needs due to its low efficiency and limited forms. Computer-aided translation software, shortened as CAT software, is therefore developed. Featuring powerful memory and fast computing speed of computers, CAT software allows translators to give full scope to creativity, which enhances traditional translation efficiency. In recent years, both CAT software and cloud translation software have been rapidly developed. The latter is built based on cloud computing technology, and is emerging one after another. This article, taking such CAT software as SDL Trados and such cloud translation platform as Tmxmall as examples, studies similarities and differences between the two different kinds of tools in terms of operation interface, translation project management and corpus management. By analyzing features of the two tools, this article seeks to provide references for translators and software engineers.

Keywords: Computer-Aided Translation; SDL Trados; Tmxmall

1. Introduction

1.1 SDL Trados

TRADOS (Translation & Documentation Software) was originally established by two German engineers, Jochen Hummel and Iko Knyphausen, and was later acquired by SDL^[1]. SDL Trados, the new name of Trados, is the first company to deliver the concept of translation memory and apply it to CAT software. At present, SDL Trados holds over 70% market shares in the global language translation software market^[2]. The software, SDL Trados Studio, is available in different user interface languages including Chinese, English, Korean, Japanese, and German. Besides, it offers settings of language pair, and can achieve translations between more than 60 languages.

SDL Trados Studio (hereinafter referred to as Trados) supports dominant operating systems, such as Windows 7, Windows 8, and Windows 10. The termbase within Trados supports for a wide array of format, not only sound and pictures, but also video and audio.

1.2 Tmxmall

Shanghai Yizhi Information Technology Co., Ltd. (Tmxmall) was established in September 2014 in China. The company, which is mainly engaged in researches and applications of data products and technologies of cloud corpus, is at the leading level at home and abroad in the technologies of corpus alignment, massive corpus data management and real-time retrieval. Tmxmall offers corpus alignment tool, corpus retrieval and exchange platform, characteristic corpus management system, cor-

-pus mall trading platform, online translation management platform, etc., being a comprehensive platform integrating corpus production, management, and sharing transactions.

While Trados represents classic translation software, Tmxmall stands for a newly emerging cloud translation platform. Trados offers offline translation operations, but the price of the software is expensive. Contrary to Trados, network environment is indispensable for Tmxmall users, and there's no need for them to purchase software, yet there are paid items during translation, which is the biggest difference between the two tools. In addition, the author compares the similarities and differences of the tools in terms of operation interface, translation project management and corpus management to provide reference for translators and software engineers.

2. Similarities and differences between SDL Trados and Tmxmall

The tools adopted in this study are SDL Trados Studio 2019, and current online version in Tmxmall official website (<https://www.tmxmall.com/>).

2.1 Operation interface

After purchasing, users are able to download and install Trados which can work without Internet connection though its independent client. Home page interface is the first view shown when opening Trados. The toolbar is mainly distributed on the left and upper sides of the interface. Functions are easy to find, such as Project Settings, Upgrading Translation Memories, Align Documents, and Terminology Management. More specific and advanced settings for translation projects are available in File from the Ribbon.

Tmxmall works in a browser on the basis of the Internet connection. Firstly, users need to register an account, and log into the main interface of its website, including introduction to the company and its products and services. When selecting the products and services options, users can find the main functions, including intelligent translation, corpus alignment, big data retrieval, corpus management, corpus sharing, open platform and services. Besides, corresponding working interface will be jumped to after users clicking on these options.

2.2 Management of translation projects

Compared with the traditional translation, management of translation projects is a major improvement for CAT software. Team cooperation can be realized through project management with the project being distributed to different translators in time sequence after being divided into different sections and stages. In this method, an efficient team cooperation on translation is therefore realized.

To create a translation project in Trados, users need to first create a new project by selecting Project at the navigation pane, and fill in the project information. Secondly, users need to add a single file or files from a folder for translation, and then add or create translation memories and terminology databases. After that, users can start the translation. When completing the translation work, translators can save the project and package the translated files before sending to reviewers or project managers.

On the Tmxmall translation platform, translators need to select functions when enter into the official website. Firstly, translators need to click on Yicat, the main translation tool in the platform, which can be found from the product and service options under the intelligent translation menu, and jump to the work interface. The main toolbar is on the left, where there are mainly functions, such as my tasks, project management, and language memories. Under the project management options, translators can create a new project or find the assigned one. Translators can send their completed translation work to the project manager who can view the work when logging in.

Compared with Trados in terms of the management of translation projects, Tmxmall translation platform is more convenient in both project creation and task receiving. Project information can be clearly seen in the management interface, such as the creator, creation date and submitting deadline. Although there is no fee required when users translate files manually within the platform. However, it charges money on each project when users export translated files, and payment can be made through Alipay, WeChat, bank transfer, and etc.

2.3 Corpus management

Corpus management, which is the main function for CAT software's comparison, is about the management of translation memories and terminology databases. Users

have a preference for CAT software that features larger inventory capacity and more ordered way of management. Translation memories refer to a language database that stores and retrieves source language segments and their corresponding translated version of the segments. The terminology database can store and retrieve the source term and its corresponding translated version of the term.

The format of translation memories is .sdltm for Trados 2019. There are mainly two methods that can obtain this format. One is by aligning bilingual documents, and the other is by upgrading .tmx format memory generated from other translation software. The procedure of first method is presented as follows. First, click on the align document from the menu and select a single file pair to create the new translation memory and complete its general information. Second, add documents in the order of the previously checked source language and target language, and select the exported alignment file format. The .tmx format is commonly chosen. Thirdly, users need to check whether the aligned text is neat or not. If there is an error, users can disconnect it by clicking on the wrong line connecting the source text and the target text, and reconnect it with the mouse. When the alignment is complete, users need to click the finish button. It should be noted that the source text and the target text can be connected at will in the alignment process, but the text cannot be segmented. In such situation, an over long alignment of sentence segment will reduce the matching degree and lead to the situation that the matching sentence segment cannot be retrieved during the use of translation memories. Besides, users may use the upgrade memory function to upgrade it to .sdltm format after exporting the text in .tmx format, and add the file to the ongoing translation project or directly import it into the created translation memory.

As for Tmxmall, import formats of translation memory support .tmx, .sdltm, .xls, and .xlsx. The procedure to create translation memories on Tmxmall translation platform is presented as follows. First, click on the language asset form Yicat. Second, select translation memory management to create the new TM, or merge different TMs and use them in translation. Translators can also search TM under the Yicat, and search the one you need by entering the name directly. Offline translation software is hard to obtain this kind of function. In

addition, functions of corpus quick search, .tmx file search under the big data retrieval are available for translators to select corpus and TM online. Corpus can be managed under the corpus management option, where TMs owned by user's own and shared corpus can be viewed by classification. There are two sections for corpus sharing, corpus mall and TM ROBORT, where users can buy corpus from all over the world and can select different types of corpus, source language and target language. TM ROBORT also support analyzing, retrieving, merging, importing and splitting the corpus. With this function, the value of TM can be deeply dug, and a more convenient and flexible user experience is provided.

From the perspective of TM, Trados is more stable but supports fewer formats. While Tmxmall is more convenient and features larger storage capacity, due to its advantages of Internet cloud platform, becoming more popular among users.

2.4 Termbases

MultiTerm is a program used for creating termbases in Trados. It is a plug-in program that can work both independently and in conjunction with Trados. There are two main ways to create a new termbase. One method is to create directly through MultiTerm and define set it according to steps. Users will finally obtain a .sdltb file. The other method is to create an excel file of terminology firstly, and set the source language, target language as well as other labels on the top line. Secondly, translators need to use SDL MultiTerm Converter to convert the file into .xml format. Finally, the termbase can be edited after opening .xml file with MultiTerm. Both of the two methods are to create .sdltb file eventually which is editable during translation and can be opened and applied directly in Trados.

Tmxmall's termbases support for .tbx, .xls, .xlsx, and .txt formats. Users can create termbases in the language asset management from Yicat. Under this option, users can import, search term and termbases and make other settings, which is quick and convenient. Moreover, corpus can be managed and edited under the option of corpus cloud steward. Users can purchase and upload their own termbases in corpus cloud mall.

For termbases, creating termbases are rather complicated in Trados. It focuses on self-producing and self-using and users don't need to pay for a second time.

While, Tmxmall, featuring sharing information, supports more formats and is easier for users to create term-bases. However, it is charging on almost all operations, filling with commercial atmosphere.

3. Conclusion

Through analyses above, it is easy to find the classic translation software such as Trados and cloud translation platform such as Tmxmall have their own advantages and disadvantages. The biggest advantage of classic translation software is that there is no need for Internet connection and payment for the second time, and has many functions. Its disadvantage is that the operation steps are complicated. Cloud translation platform, however, has simpler operation steps, which can effectively improve the work efficiency of translators. Besides, the platform doesn't had requirements on hard disk capacities due to a large amount of language materials are

saved in the cloud. The disadvantage is that it totally works based on network connection and has fewer functions compared with Trados. The author aims to provide references for those who are engaged in translation-related work by comparing the advantages and disadvantages of the two tools, which is helpful to save their time in selecting software. Meanwhile, this article also provides references for software developers to further improve software performance.

References

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