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Employing computer-assisted translation tools to achieve terminology standardization in institutional translation: Making a case for higher education

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Abstract

This paper discusses the challenges and benefits of using CAT tools to ensure standardized terminology use in translations in a tertiary education institution. It aims to address the challenges faced in official document translation from Turkish into English and German using consistent terminology. Based on specific institutional needs, a server-based collaboration platform was installed, followed by the collection and assessment of institutional texts translated by various units of the university. After their alignment/import into a server-based translation memory, the core terms used in these texts were then imported into a server-based term base. Implications are discussed and suggestions are made.

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1. Translation process and computer-assisted translation

The rapid dissemination of knowledge due to the recent technological developments has increased the need for translation around the world. The purpose of both improving the quality and responding to the growing demand for translation as fast as possible has led Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT), offering a variety of functions, to become one of the most popular practices in the world of translation. CAT supports translators with computer software to speed up and facilitate the translation process. CAT differs from machine translation in which a source text is put into

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a software tool and the translation is expected from the tool without any human contribution. In CAT, the translation is performed by translators by means of software tools such as market SDL Trados, Star Transit, Across, and Wordfast.

2. SDL Trados and its operation

For our project, we decided to use SDL Trados Studio 2014 as the most preferred CAT tool in the translation sector. The operating logic of Trados has three components: translation memories, terminology management, and project management. Trados translation process starts with opening the source text within the software tool. As soon as the source text is opened, it is split into “segments”. This process of splitting the text into segments is based on full stops because the tool assumes that a full stop signals the end of a sentence. Within each segment, there is a source text field where the original text is, and across it a target text field where the translated pieces of texts will be typed. To pass on to the next segment for translation, the translated segment needs to be approved first. When the translator approves the translated segment, the source and target translation units within this segment are matched and saved to the translation memory. The translation memory recalls these units when there are similar or the same units in a future translation. In this way, the translator can see how similar sentences (translation units) are to those that were translated before. By using the translation suggestions retrieved from the translation unit, the translator can speed up the process and ensure the production of more consistent pieces of translation. Translators who have not used a CAT tool before can transfer previous translations to the translation memory through a process called “alignment,” by matching the segments of source and target texts on the tool. Printed documents can also be loaded to translation memories by scanning such documents and exposing them to a character recognition process (OCR) with special software tools such as FineReader or Omnipage.

Trados also offers translators an opportunity to create a “term memory”, where terms and their target language equivalents are stored. Such terms can also be enriched by attaching definition, contextual information, field of use, grammatical usage suggestions, images, tables, etc. to them. In the translation process, when a previously loaded term is encountered in any segment, the equivalent term appears on a separate box in the interface for the translator’s consideration. While file-based term memories are saved on the hard drive of a computer, server-based term memories are saved on a server and are accessible by any user authorized for access. With such qualities, term memories are among the most effective tools to ensure terminology standardization.

The increasing demand for large-scale translations has made it inevitable to share the work in professional translation offices where project managers, reviewers, and terminologists collaborate on translation projects. To achieve quality translations, the coordination among all teamworkers needs to proceed smoothly. Seeing such a need, the SDL firm has developed a digital platform called “groupshare.” Completely integrated into SDL Trados Studio and SDL Multiterm, this platform brings all the workers involved in a translation project together in a certain server for their effective cooperation. In the setup stage of the platform, all the information and duties of the workers are recorded on the server. Creating a translation project on this server-based platform, the project manager then saves the translation project on the server. Afterwards, he/she decides about by which translator(s) the translation task is to be performed and by which reviewers it is to be checked. When the translation project is created, the translators who have been previously registered on the groupshare platform receive an alerting message in their e-mail accounts, and thus the project manager does not even need to write an e-mail. After this step, the translator does not need to get the source text from the manager. By clicking on the “open groupshare project” button in SDL Studio, the translator can access the translation work saved in the server. The project manager can add a translation memory and a term memory to the translation project package as well. Thus, this complicated and longwinded cooperation process is expedited, and the use of target language equivalents of the terms as determined by terminologists in the term memory is ensured. Conducting all translation activities on a server contributes to reduce costs by enhancing the quality and quantity of the term memory units as well.

3. Institutional translation and terminology management

3.1. Institutional translation

Drawing from diverse fields of translation study such as institutional translation, official document translation (at times involving legal documents), translation quality, and translation technologies, our project is guided by various

sources from the complementary fields of translation studies and terminology fields. The previous work in the field of institutional translation mostly focuses on the translations carried out in EU institutions or international organizations (e.g. Fischer, 2010; Koskinen, 2008; Koskinen, 2009; Lafeber, 2012; Pym, 2004; Wagner, Bech & Martinez 2002), as well as official text translations in Spain (Mayoral Asensio, 2003), and the translation activities in Canada Translation Bureau (Mossop, 2007). According to Koskinen (2008, p. 25), who focuses on institutional translation based on her experience as a translator at the European Commission, the quality of translation in an institution enhances or harms not the translator's, but the institution's reliability and reputation. Analyzing intergovernmental institutional translations, Lafeber (2012, p. 23) states that institutional translation has two different roles: 1) perform the source text function, and 2) ensure that the translation service (and thus the institution) "looks good". Regarding the first function, various texts are produced that serve different purposes in an institution, and in order to conduct international affairs these texts sometimes need to be translated into various languages. The texts that require translation in university contexts are mostly informative, but occasionally some procedural (operational) texts like university promotion catalogues or administrator speeches may need translating. The most commonly encountered problem in institutional translation is the lack of standard and consistent language use, which is particularly true in the Turkish context (Altay, 2011). The original or translated texts produced in a foreign language become the official records of institutional communication (Koskinen, 2010, p. 58), which requires translations to be standard and consistent (Lafeber, 2012, p. 19; Trosborg, 1997, p. 151). Today, large-scale international organizations also have the same concern. For example, different associated units of United Nations collaborated on a common UN terminology portal project (Zhao & Cao, 2012). Using a standard language in translations is important for high quality communication, while at the same time it contributes to the standardization of the institutional language used. Every document (original or translated) that is created in institutional environments becomes a reference for the ensuing documents or translations (Koskinen, 2008, p. 125; Garrido Nombela, 2012, p. 145). Hence, the emphasis placed upon the institutional translation contributes to standardization of institutional terminology and to establishing institutional stylistic traditions. The second function explained by Lafeber relates to the institutional public image in the international arena. While the institutional translators contribute to the reputation of their institution by using a proper language, style and form that is in keeping with the institutional brand, they are also responsible for performing institutional communication in the most accurate, clear and effective way possible.

Creating dictionaries to be used for institutional translations is very important for standardization, especially in cases where the translation activity is not conducted by a single office, as is the case for Anadolu University. Creating a termbase and offering it to be used by the institutional translators or foreign language text creators will ensure the produced original or translated texts to be of higher quality. Especially with the popularization of translation memories, translators have started to create and manage their own term resources (Bowker, 2014, p. 302), which allows translators to play an effective role in the management of institutional terminology.

3.2. Translation and terminology

In order to ensure quality in the use of terms and concepts, firmly established reference resources can be used (Schmitz 2007, p. 539). Terminology work has now evolved to incorporate CAT tools, with the increasing quantity and quality of computer programs and apps for terminology management.

To make sure terminology is consistent, not only creating terminology, but also its management should be followed up by an expert team, and the changes to be made to the terminology need to be managed by a single authorized person (Schmitz 2007, p. 541–542). Terminological meta models (ISO 16642:2003), data categories (ISO 12620:2009) and exchange formats (ISO 30074:2008) lay out principles and help terminologists to design, implement, maintain and use terminology management systems (Schmitz, 2011). With a rich term memory whereby terms are automatically completed, the system not only saves time for the translator but also ensures coherence in the rendered translation. The fact that the term memory works with various filters provides another advantage (Schmitz, 2007, p. 542). Inadequate terminology use might be arising from the lack of "a commonly agreed upon standard subject-specific term base in the target language" (Cabré, 2010, p. 360). In cases where multiple equivalence alternatives are available, in order to select from among the available alternatives or bring forth a new term suggestion, the issues such as the grammar and lexicon of the language, available resources, termbase quality, and the linguistic appropriateness of the

suggested term should be taken into account (Cabr , 2010, p. 360). Faced with multiple equivalence options, a translator may alternately use the existing equivalences, may classify equivalences by various usages, or pick one equivalence for systematic use.

Translators utilize monolingual or multilingual texts, and terminology resources to solve the terminology problems that arise during the translation process, but compared to traditional dictionaries and indexes, “term banks” offer a better alternative with their updateability and their high data capacity (Cabr , 2010, p. 361–362). Bař (2011), who explained the problems encountered in a terminology work in ascertaining the Turkish equivalents of customs terms, serves as a model to our project in terms of using the Trados MultiTerm software and a bilingual term base. This terminology work aimed to save time for translators and produce quality translations with the help of a consistent terminology. Since sufficient information could not be retrieved from dictionaries, parallel texts (e.g. official documents, agreements, protocols, etc.) had to be used. The existing terms were gathered, EuroVoc of the EU was searched, and the terms related to customs were selected and added to MultiTerm.

According to “Principles for term formation” in *ISO 704* (2000, 7.3.1), an expression needs to have a single meaning in order to be a standard term. It must further include transparency, consistency, appropriateness, linguistic economy, derivability, linguistic correctness, and preference for native language (Arntz, Picht, & Mayer, 2009, p. 113). However, there may be more than one way of specification that correspond to the same concept, and these may be used interchangeably to avoid monotony in language use, such as “economic integration” and “financial consolidation”. Such specifications may lead outsiders to the field to form misconceptions about these terms and think that they have different meanings. The spread of a mistake or an inconsistency would not only decrease the translation quality, but also jeopardize organizational reputation. Exemplifying a terminology project implemented in DaimlerChrysler, Weilandt (2007) stresses that terminology work should be conducted in the step of creating the source text before the translation process starts. Source documents that are clear and consistent in terminology decrease translators' problems related to the source text, eliminating the complaints and objections of users. A certain term that is preferred by the marketer just because it sounds very good may mean nothing for the technician working at the car service. That explains why the target population also needs to be considered. For terminology work in companies, Weilandt recommends a separate unit responsible for terminology set up to provide assistance and long-term solutions addressing diverse expectations, processes, and target population needs.

3.3. *Translation and terminology in higher education*

Today, with the ripple effects of globalization, Bologna process, and increasing exchange programs, the issue of higher education terminology harmonization has gained vital significance. Due to the differences in national education systems, those who are not native speakers of English but are educated in English have been experiencing a number of challenges regarding terminology. Therefore, so as to harmonize terminology at the international level, it has become crucial to prepare multilingual dictionaries in the field of education. Budykina (2012) aimed to harmonize the terms used in higher education by preparing an English-Russian Higher Education Dictionary. Focusing on three dimensions (cognitive, linguistic, and communicative) to develop terminology, Budykina first determined the terminology fields of use by compiling the terms used in educational research, theory and practices from resources including university brochures, course descriptions, bilingual education dictionaries and university websites. This approach is based on the view that a term used in a resource (linguistic dimension) refers to a concept (cognitive dimension). Furthermore, she conducted an equivalence analysis and sent the results to field specialists and linguists for review. Fernandez Costales's (2012) analysis of 800 European university websites revealed that since there is usually no specifically intended target audience for the university websites, the majority of the translations are addressed to the global readership, with few websites offering content in more than two languages. He found that 70% of the universities do not receive any translation services, 20% of them work with a translation office for certain parts of translations, and only 10% work with a translation unit in the university.

4. **Standardizing terminology for Anadolu University**

The rise in international relations of higher education institutions brings about the need for the translation of various texts into foreign languages. The soaring number of students/staff in mobility programs like Erasmus, the growing

group of students seeking education and/or career opportunities abroad, common accreditation requirements like ECTS, expanding range of international/intercollegiate projects, and increasing need for multilingual university websites all together indicate the clear importance of high-quality translation and production of official texts in foreign languages. At Anadolu University, the urgent need for such translation is currently met by various discrete units of the university, namely the Translation Unit affiliated with the Rector's Office, the Department of Translation and Interpreting in the Faculty of Humanities, the Department of Foreign Languages in the Faculty of Education, and the School of Foreign Languages, each functioning independently. This obviously results in a non-standard use of language, style and terminology in the translations rendered, with ultimate potential damage to institutional image and credibility. In the present project, in the light of the abovementioned national and international studies, and analyzing the translation work currently under way in our university, the problems regarding terminology for translation are identified, and solutions for these problems are sought. In order to standardize terminology, first we compiled various documents that have been translated in our university. Picking the most common documents, we aligned them first by using Trados and we saved the terms in these documents into the translation memory. We are in the process of creating a termbase that is continuously upgradable and extendable to allow constant improvement, instead of producing a single finished product, as recommended by Temmerman and Kerremans (2012).

4.1. Problems encountered in establishing English terminological equivalents

Given our obligation to ensure understandability in English and German, our terminology problems specific to our context mostly relate to the educational setting, legal and cultural incompatibilities, and culture-specific limitations of the source language. Some specific problematic categories involve, but not limited to the following:

4.1.1. Existence of a total gap between the two languages (the cases where the concept does not exist in the target language and a new term has to be created)

Example 1: Some terminological gaps especially regarding assessment such as: bütünleme sınavı (resit examination), telafi sınavı (make-up of classes), and mazeret sınavı (makeup examination).

Example 2: Some terms referring to exceptions given to students such as different types of muafiyet (exemption): "Ders muafiyeti", "Hazırlık muafiyeti", and "Kredi fazlası yüzünden kalınan dersten muafiyet."

Example 3: Hazırlık sınıfı ("preparatory class" does not mean the same in the English context).

Example 4: Öğrenci affı ("Student amnesty" does not exist in English).

4.1.2. The pairs that match as terms but do not match in meaning (false cognates)

Example: "Pedagojik Formasyon" is "Teacher training certificate," not "Pedagogical Formation."

4.1.3. Expressing the same concept with different terms in the SL with the availability of only one equivalent in the TL

Example 1: Using three different terms to indicate the same official rank as "daire başkanı vs. şube müdürü vs. idare amiri" ("daire başkanı" and "amir" were translated as "director" while "şube müdürü" was translated as "head").

Example 2: Using two different terms "konukevi vs. misafırhane" to refer to guesthouse, which partly arises from the inconsistent language policy at the university regarding adoption of terms with Turkish versus Arabic etymology. Here, "konukevi" is the more recent term used for "guesthouse" in Turkish, with connotations to modern Turkish. Some other terms in this category are as follows:

- a) Eğitim-Öğretim, Akademik Koşullar → Academic Conditions
- b) Kayıt, Kabul → Admission
- c) Sözleşme, Anlaşma, Kontrat, Protokol, Akit → Agreement
- d) Madde, Hüküm → Article
- e) Yerleşke, Kampüs, Külliye → Campus
- f) Hükümler, Şartlar, Koşullar → Conditions

- g) Müfredat, Eğitim Programı → Curriculum
- h) Dökümantasyon, Belgelendirme → Documentation
- i) Olanaklar, Tesisler, Kolaylıklar → Facilities
- j) Ortak, Karşılıklı → Mutual
- k) Madde, Hüküm → Provision
- l) Koşul, Şart, Yükümlülük → Requirement
- m) Fesih, Sonlandırma → Termination

4.1.4. *Ambiguity in the SL (Turkish) necessitating the need for contextual clarification (the terms whose meanings are too hard to tease out without context)*

Example 1: 1-3 barajı (1st-3rd year barrier).

Example 2: Dersten çekilme (Withdrawal from a course).

Example 3: Types of doctoral degrees such as “lisansa dayalı” (undergraduate-based), “yüksek lisansa dayalı” (graduate-based), and “sanatta yeterlik” (proficiency in arts). The literature suggests that the context must have zero effect on terminology creation, however in these cases the context affects the decision-making process.

4.1.5. *Need to distinguish between Open education and On-campus education terms.*

A problem that has emerged as unique to our university was that some terms needed to be re-defined for Open Education use.

Example: AÖF danışmanlık (Open Education Counseling)

4.2. *Problems encountered in establishing German terminological equivalents*

Germany has developed its own kind of higher education, based on the developments, circumstances and needs in its specific historical context. German universities are autonomous, with each state regulating its own higher education. Undergraduate (3 years) and graduate degrees used to be integrated, but with the Bologna process, they have become separate. Since higher education is state-based, and each university is autonomous, there are variations in the higher education terminology used.

Example 1: Fakülte: →1: Fakultät (We agreed on this term)

→2: Fachbereich (which means “union of departments”)

Example 2: Edebiyat Fakültesi: →1: Geisteswissenschaftliche Fakultät

→2: Philosophische Fakultät (We agreed on this term)

We did not translate “Edebiyat” (Literature or Letters) verbatim, because this faculty in Turkey includes other departments besides philology or literature.

Example 3: The most challenging term for us was “enstitü” (institute)

Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü: →Institut (Graduate School) für Erziehungswissenschaften

Engelliler Araştırma Enstitüsü: →Institut für Behindertenforschung

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü: →Institut (Graduate School) für Naturwissenschaften

Güzel Sanatlar Enstitüsü: →Institut (Graduate School) für Bildende Künste

Sağlık Bilimleri Enstitüsü: →Institut (Graduate School) für Gesundheitswissenschaften

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü: →Institut (Graduate School) für Geistes-, Sozial- und Wirtschaftswissenschaften

The graduate programs in Germany are still offered in the departments or units associated with departments. There is no “stand-alone” unit. We cannot directly say “Institut” for institute, because this is also used for “department.” Using this term only might have resulted in confusion. Therefore, we ended up using the term “Institut (Graduate School)”. Germany has been using the “Graduate School” term in the post-Bologna period as well. We did not use the term “Graduiertenschule” for “Institute” or “Graduate School” because its denotation is very different: In German, “Graduiertenschule” only includes doctoral level studies, and usually refers to a team of scientists working on a research project. The Turkish term “Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü” (Graduate School of Social Sciences) had to be a lengthy one: “Institut (Graduate School) für Geistes-, Sozial- und Wirtschaftswissenschaften” The issue here was that

the Turkish term “Sosyal Bilimler” and the English term “Social Sciences” have a much broader meaning than the German term “Sozialwissenschaften.” “Sozialwissenschaften” does not, for example, include “Turkish Language & Literature” or “Translation Studies.” They are covered by the term “Geisteswissenschaften.” Likewise, “Business Administration” can only be covered by the term “Wirtschaftswissenschaften.”

Example 4: It was difficult to come up with equivalences for “Bölüm” (Department) and “Anabilim Dalı” (Program) because German does not have any such hierarchy. “Bölüm” could have been given in German with “Institut” or “Abteilung”. But we preferred the term “Institut” to distinguish it from “Anabilim Dalı”. For “Anabilim Dalı,” which is a subsection of “Bölüm,” we picked “Abteilung”.

Example 5: For the following three terms in Turkish, we had to use the same term in German, for lack of any better alternatives. Devam Yükümlülüğü (Compulsory Attendance): → Anwesenheitspflicht

Devam Zorunluluğu (Compulsory Attendance): → Anwesenheitspflicht

Devam Koşulu (Attendance Requirement): → Anwesenheitspflicht

Example 6: We had to add an explanation here because “Akademik Danışmanlık” is a term used in both Open Education and On-campus education, with different meanings.

Akademik Danışmanlık (Academic Counseling): → Tutor/in Im Rahmen der Fernstudienfakultät ist

Akademik Danışman (Academic Counselor): → der Tutor/die Tutorin, der die Präsenzveranstaltung führt

Example 7: Another example for when an explanation was necessary:

Dikey Geçiş Sınavı (DGS) (Vertical Transfer Examination): → Vertikale Übergangsprüfung (Prüfung nach Abschluss eines 2jährigen Associate Degree-Studiengangs für einen Wechsel in das 3. Studienjahr eines 4jährigen Bachelorstudiengangs).

Example 8: We had to consider “Gender” as well. In some cases we used “in” to clarify:

“Tutor/in” was used instead of “Tutor/Tutorin.” This is the current practice in German. “Professor/in”

“Uzman” = “Fachmann” (for males), and “Fachfrau” for females, so we used both, as in: “Fachmann/Fachfrau.”

Example 9: Normally, the academic titles are not to be translated. For example, they are not translated for diploma equivalency. However, for the titles of “Yrd. Doç.” (Assist. Prof.) and “Doç.” (Assoc. Prof.) we preferred to use the English terms because the academic promotion system in Turkey is the same as that of the US. The system in German is different. By forgoing the Turkish titles, we aimed to be clearer in meaning.

Example 10: We preferred the English version since it is the term of choice by Germans as well.

Uluslararası İlişkiler Birimi: → International Office

Example 11: We had to use the English term “Associate Degree” for the Turkish term “Önlisans,” because it is simply nonexistent in the German education system.

4.3. General strategies used to deal with terminology standardization problems

1. Checking the term usage in other national/international university websites (Highlighting the local translations of the terms, Google ranks the Turkish links at the top of search result rankings, thus, the search results turns out to be misleading in some cases). Especially in the cases where new terms seemed necessary, other Turkish university websites (especially those conducting their instruction in the English medium) were consulted.
2. Reaching a consensus on which term to adopt through discussion with the Anadolu project team,
3. Simplification (This strategy involves generalizing or making a term more comprehensive but ambiguous or less specific. For example, coming up with a single term for a source term expressed by three different words, pulling them under one term, as exemplified in 4.1.3 above.)
4. Elaboration (Making a term more specific by narrowing its meaning down, as exemplified in 4.1.4 above)

5. Conclusion and suggestions

In the Turkish higher education, where internationalization is often underlined by administrators as an extremely urgent issue, it is evident in the light of our findings that even a consistent/common terminology in Turkish is lacking, which indicates a serious problem to be overcome before taking the next step of proper terminology translation to harmonize with the international terminology. Such ambiguity in the Turkish higher education terminology

underscores the dire need for standardization and a consensus on higher education concepts. The gaps and absence of conceptual equivalences in the Turkish higher education terminology pool is another indicator of its current incompatibility with the international education standards. The fact that the university staff is rendering translations as an additional task, and the absence of a translation office are the major impediments preventing the use of standard terminology. Using the strategies above, and creating a Trados term memory to introduce a common terminology for all translators in our university, we have taken the first step towards such a standard terminology use. We have tried to ensure standards by using a server-based, staff-accessible program. Ultimately we are hoping to create a “style guide” as the one used by EU for international correspondence to standardize our source texts, and set up a translation office whose sole task will be performing high-quality translations.

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