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Terminology Management in Translation Projects

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As one of the key technologies of computer-aided translation (CAT), terminology management can guarantee terminology consistency and translation quality in translation projects. At present, domestic research on terminology management in Chinese-English translation projects is relatively in-depth, and there are many terminology management systems for Chinese-English language pairs available for translation teams. However, research on terminology management in Chinese-German translation projects is relatively scarce, and many domestic terminology management systems and tools do not yet support the Chinese-German language pair. In view of this, this paper takes a government website translation project as an example, focusing on terminology management in Chinese-German translation projects, in order to provide reference and inspiration for future terminology management in Chinese-German translation projects.

Keywords: terminology management, translation project, Chinese-German language pair

Introduction

A 2016 survey by Software and Documentation Localization (SDL), a major global language service provider, showed that about 80% of language service providers reported that it was difficult to avoid revising translations again based on third-party feedback. Among respondents who needed to revise translations, 48% believed that terminology inconsistency was the main reason for rework and revision. In addition, Lionbridge, a well-known international language service company, estimated that 15% of the total cost of translation and localization projects was caused by rework, with terminology inconsistency being the chief culprit (Lionbridge, 2009). This shows that terminology consistency is an embodiment of translation quality, and it is very necessary to manage terminology in translation. In translation projects, the earlier terminology management is implemented, the lower the management cost, and the easier it is to control the quality of the entire translation project in the later stages (Wang & Zhang, 2014, p. 64).

Compared with foreign countries, domestic research on terminology management started relatively late, but many scholars have conducted research on terminology management from different perspectives. The research perspectives are diverse and relatively in-depth, and these rich research results have provided a solid theoretical foundation for this article. However, observation shows that domestic research on terminology management in Chinese-English translation projects is relatively in-depth, and there are many terminology management systems for Chinese-English language pairs available for translation teams. The 2019 China Language Service Industry Development Report released by the Translators Association of China shows that German ranks fourth in translation volume. Nevertheless, there is currently little research on terminology management in Chinese-German translation projects, and many terminology management systems and tools on the market do not yet

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support the Chinese-German language pair, which has caused certain difficulties for terminology management in Chinese-German translation.

This paper takes a website translation project as an example and, in combination with the translation project process, discusses the four stages of terminology management: terminology extraction, terminology translation, terminology updating and maintenance, and terminology unified retrieval.

Terminology Management

Chinese terminologist Feng Zhiwei (2011, p. 1) defines terminology as "conventional symbols that express or define professional concepts through speech or writing." Modern terminology has undergone more than 80 years of research history, and its disciplinary system has become increasingly complete and mature. Terminology management is an important research field of modern terminology. Terminology management is the practical activity of managing terminology resources to meet a certain purpose, usually including the collection, description, processing, storage, editing, presentation, search, maintenance, and sharing of terminology. Terminology management can guarantee terminology consistency and translation quality in translations and is an important part of translation project management. Although domestic research on terminology is still in its infancy, domestic scholars have still conducted research on terminology management from the following four aspects: the theoretical level, the practical level, the technical tool introduction level, and the terminology management ability and teaching level. It can be seen that domestic research on terminology management has already been carried out from multiple perspectives, and the abundant research results have provided great reference for the terminology management work in this paper.

Terminology management is very important for both enterprises and multi-person collaborative translation projects. From the enterprise perspective, the goal of terminology management is to ensure that professional terms related to a specific organization's products, services, and trademarks can remain consistent in its source documents and all target translations (Muegge, 2009, p. 2). Terminology management can not only improve an enterprise's operational efficiency and share internal terminology resources, but also save translation costs. At present, the language service industry is developing rapidly, and the scale of translation projects is becoming larger and larger, mainly reflected in the large volume of translated texts, tight translation deadlines, and high requirements for translation quality. Obviously, the traditional translation model in which one translator performs the translation cannot meet the above needs, and multi-person collaborative translation has gradually replaced single-person translation. However, in multi-person collaborative translation projects, terminology inconsistency inevitably occurs. Against this background, terminology management has become crucial. Terminology management can guarantee terminology consistency and translation quality in collaborative content. Terminology management in multi-person collaborative translation projects can be achieved by using terminology management systems (Terminology Management System) and terminology database (Term Database) technologies in all stages of the project process. This paper will focus on terminology management work in multi-person collaborative translation projects.

Terminology Management in Translation Projects

Terminology is the crystallization of human scientific knowledge in language, and is a conventional linguistic symbol that expresses or defines professional concepts through speech or writing. However, in translation practice, the scope of terminology can often be expanded to include high-frequency words appearing

in the source text (see Kang, Wei, & Qu, 2015, p. 108), that is, concepts that appear very frequently in the source text and have specific and single connotations, whose translations also need to remain consistent. It is worth mentioning here that the terminology referred to in this paper not only includes professional terms within professional fields, but also includes words and phrases that appear repeatedly in this translation project. Since these words appear repeatedly, their translations also need to remain consistent, so they are included in the scope of terminology and managed accordingly. Combining the translation project process, the author divides terminology management into four stages: terminology extraction, terminology translation, terminology updating and maintenance, and terminology unified retrieval.

Terminology Extraction

After the translation content is determined, the project manager is responsible for packaging and assigning the translation content to translation team members and dividing the translation work. After the division of work is completed, preliminary terminology extraction work can be carried out. The terminology extraction process adopted in this translation project is as follows: First, computer-aided translation (CAT) tools are used to preliminarily extract high-frequency vocabulary; then manual screening is carried out to remove non-terms and interfering words; the preliminarily extracted terms are made into an online terminology list and shared with translation team members. According to the translation content they are responsible for, each translator extracts specialized terms and uploads them to supplement the online terminology list.

Terminology Translation

Terminology extraction tools can be roughly divided into three categories: terminology extraction tools embedded in CAT tools, such as memoQ; independent terminology extraction tools, such as SDL MultiTerm Extract; and cloud-based terminology extraction tools, such as Yufan Terminology Treasure. After preliminary terminology extraction is completed, an online spreadsheet can be used to create a terminology list.

Terminology Updating and Maintenance

After terminology extraction and terminology translation are completed, a Chinese-German bilingual terminology list is obtained. However, as the translation project progresses, translators may have questions about vocabulary in the previous bilingual terminology list. These words may or may not exist in the terminology list. By clarifying these questions, the translations of some existing terms may need to be appropriately revised, and new words not yet included may need to be studied to determine whether it is necessary to add them to the terminology list. This is the process of terminology updating and maintenance. During this process, modifications and additions can be made directly in the existing online terminology list.

Terminology Unified Retrieval

Even if the production of a bilingual terminology list, the creation of a new online terminology database, and the updating and maintenance of the terminology database have been completed in a translation project, terminology inconsistency may still exist in the final translation. Therefore, after the first draft is completed and before it is submitted to the client, the terminology manager needs to conduct a terminology unified retrieval of the first draft to ensure terminology consistency and translation quality in the translation.

Conclusion

Terminology management tools should place greater emphasis on languages other than English in the future and continue to optimize their functionality. On April 29, 2021, the China Association of Translators released

the "2020 China Language Services Industry Development Report" (hereinafter referred to as the "Report"). The Report indicates that commonly used languages, such as English, Japanese, German, French, and Russian currently account for the largest volume of translation work. However, many terminology management tools on the market are designed and developed based on Chinese-English pairs, offering limited support for other languages—particularly lacking integrated tools that encompass a wide range of terminology management functions. With regard to terminology management for this project, this paper utilized Yufan Terminology Treasure for terminology extraction, Shimo Online Docs for terminology translation, and YunYike Online Translation Collaboration Platform for terminology updates and maintenance. The tools used for these three tasks could easily be integrated into a single terminology management tool; technical optimization and upgrades could significantly improve the efficiency of future terminology management work. Furthermore, most terminology management tools can only be downloaded and used locally, and they support only the Windows operating system, not macOS or other systems. With advances in technology, online tools are becoming increasingly convenient. Online tools are not restricted by computer operating systems, do not require local installation, and can be accessed from anywhere—this represents a direction for future optimization and updates to terminology management tools.

The development of multilingual terminology management tools often requires not only the efforts of technical personnel in science and engineering, but also the assistance of language specialists in the humanities. Engineers and technologists can only resolve technical issues related to the software, while linguistic expertise requires the support of scholars in the humanities and language fields. Therefore, cross-disciplinary collaboration between the sciences and the humanities also contributes significantly to the development of multilingual terminology management tools. Due to the limitations of the author's own professional background, he can only offer suggestions here regarding the technical optimization of German-Chinese terminology management tools.

In the tide of globalization and information technology, the development of the language service industry is becoming increasingly professionalized and collaborative. How to achieve close cooperation among multiple people or teams to ensure translation consistency is crucial. Managing terminology in translation projects can improve efficiency and ensure terminology consistency and translation quality to the greatest extent. However, China's terminology management technology is still in its infancy, and the number of universities offering terminology management courses in China is also very small. In the context of the new era, we must attach importance to cultivating students' terminology management abilities, and at the same time, strive to develop terminology management technology, especially terminology management systems and tools that can be used for languages other than English. There is still very broad research space for terminology management.

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