

## MEMOQ, A CAT TOOL USED IN TECHNICAL TRANSLATION COURSES AT DEBRECEN UNIVERSITY

ZITA HAJDU<sup>1</sup>, ILDIKÓ TAR<sup>1</sup>, JÁNOS FARKAS<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

This paper addresses some specific features of memoQ, a computer-assisted translation tool in the context of translation training at the Centre of Business Communication and Professional Language Studies, Debrecen University. The authors aim to briefly present the development of CAT tools, the key features of memoQ and its integration in the curriculum of the Business and Economics translation course. The Centre of Business Communication and Professional Language Studies at the Faculty of Business and Economics sought to develop an entirely new structure for technical translation training. Besides focusing on the traditional translation skills, the objective was to provide an in-depth understanding of translation techniques, the ability of using AI based CAT tools and prepare the students for a new environment in the global job market with particular regard to the demand of translation agencies. The study discusses the following questions: How has the integration of memoQ, a computer-assisted translation tool affected our technical translation training program? What functions of memoQ help trainee translators to be more efficient, accurate and reliable and thus more employable in the labour market?

**Keywords:** CAT tools, memoQ, key memoQ features, technical translation courses, labour market demands

### Introduction

With advances in technology, especially the rise of artificial intelligence, translation is also undergoing revolutionary changes. Artificial Intelligence (AI) has huge potential to revolutionize and transform the future of translation. While human translators need a long time to complete a translation, AI can produce instant translations, even in multiple languages. This can result in significant time and cost savings for companies, allowing them to respond more quickly to customer needs. AI-based translation technology comes in many forms. One of the most common ways is through the use of translation tools, which can be downloaded or used online.

Historically, machine translation has been known to be inaccurate, causing many businesses to avoid it in their translation projects. However, with the advances in artificial intelligence in recent years, the quality of AI translation has improved dramatically, making it a reliable tool for accelerating and supporting international communication,

AI-based translation technology is constantly evolving and is expected to continue to develop in the coming years. AI-based translation technology is already usable and popular, but it still has its shortcomings, especially in terms of text clarity and accuracy. The future of AI-based translation technology therefore holds exciting

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<sup>1</sup> University of Debrecen, Hungary, Faculty of Business and Economics, Centre of Business Communication and Professional Language Studies

and diverse opportunities. At the moment, AI is unlikely to eliminate the translation profession. AI-based translation technology offers a fast and efficient solution for translating texts, but it cannot adequately understand the cultural and linguistic complexities that determine translation quality. Translators will continue to play an important role in ensuring the quality of translation and the transmission of cultural context. In addition, translators also perform a number of other tasks, such as editing and proofreading documents, which cannot be automated. AI-based translation technology therefore helps the translators, but does not replace them.

No doubt, only human translators will continue to be able to convey the subtle nuances of languages and the specifics of local cultures. AI can increase the efficiency and accessibility of translations, while human translators guarantee quality and accuracy of cultural context. Together, AI and human translators broaden our opportunities for global interaction and information flow.

In our study, we aim to answer the following research questions: How has the integration of memoQ, a computer-assisted translation tool impacted the technical translation training programme at the Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Debrecen? What functions of memoQ help would-be translators to be more efficient, precise and reliable and thus more employable in the labour market?

## **The history of machine-assisted translation**

Computer-assisted translation can be considered a relatively new phenomenon, as it can be traced back not more than two decades. It was first invented in the 1980s when computer companies like Fujitsu, Hitachi, NEC, Sharp and Toshiba (Morosoff 2016) created the earliest versions in Japan. The technological developments in the 1990s paved the way for “machine-aided human translation” (MAHT) (Isabelle 1993). The initial implementations of such translation systems were used in the translation services of national and international governmental and military entities. In Europe, the European Commission stood out as one of the pioneering organisations to adopt MT systems, driven by the significant need for translations. (Hutchins 2003).

Machine-aided human translation includes software translation tools that offer access to online dictionaries, remote terminology databanks, etc., which function as “translation workstations” (Hutchins 2003). All these tools are referred to as computer-assisted translation (CAT). Their use is necessitated by the fact that people prefer using their languages in the era of globalisation, the rapid exchange of information through the internet creates a demand for mutual understanding, and the capacity of human translators is limited. All these have resulted in new demands for faster, cheaper machine translation in line with the development of cutting-edge technologies (Craciunescu et al 2004).

## **Literature review**

The development of the concept of machine translation has received much attention over the past decades. Without aiming to give an exhaustive list, the paper presents the views of some researchers and experts on this theme. Austermüehl’s thought (2001) can be considered as a starting point: “In the information age, translation, seen as a knowledge-based activity, requires a completely new strategy concerning information logistics. It reflects a paradigm shift in the methodological-practical aspects of translation that is not only restricted to the professional world of translating, but that also influences the areas of teaching and researching”. There are

two fundamental categories of machine translation (MT) systems: the first is a fully automatic system that endeavours to translate sentences and texts in their entirety, and the second involves employing various translation aids to assist translator, such as dictionaries, grammars, and translation memories (Hutchins 2003). Studies have shown that CAT tools incorporate spell checkers, terminology managers, electronic dictionaries, full-text search tools, concordancers, bitexts, translation memory (TM) managers and more recently, machine translation (MT) engines. The statistical MT approach (Koehn 2010) has generated fresh expectations within the translation industry (Federico et al 2012).

Although CAT tools have become an integral part of professional translation over the past two decades, many translators still treat them with doubts or disinterest. While they are recognised as contributing to consistency and speed, they can also limit and otherwise negatively affect the translation process in a number of ways. A large-scale online survey of professional translators asked users of CAT tools about their features. The results show that even after many years of use professional translators find CAT tools irritating. More than half of the respondents complained about the user interface or the CAT tool's features. The most frequently cited problem was the complexity of the user interface, including the lack of an intuitive navigation system, the lack of user-friendliness and the fact that too many clicks are required to perform an operation. The positive aspects of CAT tools are the reduction of retranslation work and the improvement in consistency (O'Brien et al 2017).

The introduction and integration of CAT tools into the curriculum of translation courses is highly recommended in order to improve the competencies of translation students and maximise their potential in today's labour market. It has proven successful in developing students' skills and competencies and maximising their productivity. However, there is a need to teach students both the potential and the limitations of translation with CAT tools. Instead of expecting a fully automated and high-quality output, students should view pre- and post-editing as an important stage in the translation process. It is important to prepare students to deal with new technologies and the challenges they will face during their studies. The more familiar translation students become with the CAT tools, recognising their reasonable potential and current limitations, the less anxious they are. (Alotaibi 2014).

CAT tools also aim to speed up the translation process. One class of them can be downloaded to a computer desktop and used offline, and there are cloud-based tools that allow the translator to work online. In the case of desktop (or offline) translation software, the advantages lie in the fact that it can be accessed without an internet connection. The disadvantage is that they take up space on the computer when installed and can only be used on one computer. The new generation of translation software programmes is cloud-based, thus these tools do not need to be installed on a computer and can be accessed from any device with an internet connection. They save time, do not lose data, furthermore they are frequently updated. However, these software programmes can be subject to certain risks, such as being hacked (Han 2020).

The main components of state-of-the-art CAT tools are translation memories (TMs). Translators can accept, reject or modify suggestions received from the TM engine. The size of the translation memory increases with every new translation. General purpose CAT tools provide various functions, most commonly translation memory, glossary and terminology management system, concordance search contextualization of words, quality estimation checking, auto-completion suggestions, and a number of administrative functions. Users can choose the most

suitable translation versions offered by user-friendly CAT tools. Users can also upload their own translation memory to the platform or make use of the back-up translation memory integrated in the tool (Vela et al 2019)

### **The “Hungarian” CAT tool: memoQ**

MemoQ is a translation environment tool which was developed by three young Hungarian language technologists, Balázs Kis, István Lengyel and Gábor Ugray, who established the Kilgray Company, a provider of translation management systems in 2004. The first version of memoQ was released in 2006, and since then, the software has proved increasingly popular among freelance translators, translation companies and enterprises worldwide. It is worth highlighting that the developers are translators, so all the essential components and features of computer-aided translation are integrated into one tool. In practice, it means simplicity, easy and precise application facilitated by a logical structure of options, e.g. default resources and additional applications. It is a flexible system, and translators can adjust its functions to their personal preferences and likes.

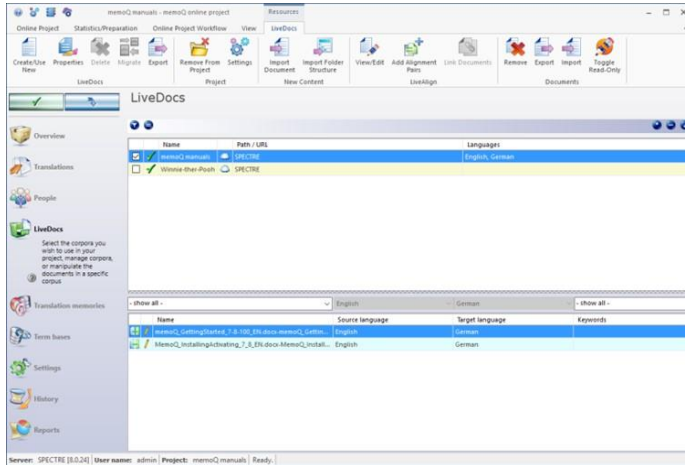
The non-exhaustive list of the most popular MemoQ features is the following:

- Project automation – previous project setup can be saved and used for a new one, reducing preparation time. It means that if the translator regularly prepares translations for a client and has a new task, MemoQ reuses the previous setup features of the Language pair, LiveDocs, Translation memories, Term bases and Muses adjusted for the technical language required by the client's business profile. This way, the translator can tailor the available tools to his and the client's needs and save considerable time.
- Project monitoring: MemoQ refers to checking and managing translation projects using the Memoq translation management system (TMS). Memoq provides tools for translators to monitor the progress and status of translation projects efficiently. Here are some key aspects of project monitoring in Memoq:
  - Dashboard overview (the list of currently running projects with crucial information, e.g. deadlines),
  - Project tracking: the program displays the translation progress in the current project and indicates a potential slowdown,
  - Deadline Management: Memoq can coordinate the multiple tasks of several translators in a project or a translation agency, e.g., punctuality and providing warnings in case of delays.
- Livedo: alternatives to the user's translation memory

This tool offers the immediate reuse of the source language and its translations. LiveDocs is an in-built feature of memoQ, where translators can adjust files in seconds and use them as reference files in their work later. In contrast with the Translation Memory, LiveDocs preserves all translated documents, not just segments. A translator must first create a LiveDocs corpus and import his selected reference material if he wants to use translated documents. A LiveDocs corpus can accommodate any file format supported by Memoq for translation. If a translator has a source document and its corresponding translation in Microsoft Word, he can import both documents into a new LiveDocs corpus. Memoq will automatically synchronise the files. It means each sentence in the source document will

match its equivalent in the target document. In an upcoming translation, memoQ will present segments from these documents in a manner similar to how it retrieves segments from translation memories.

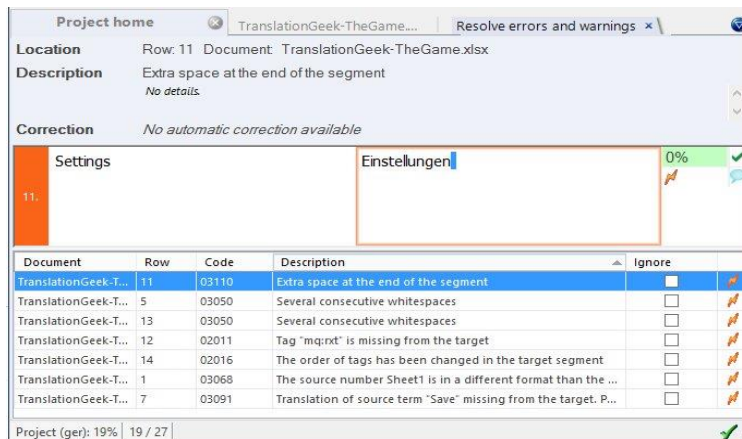
Figure 1. LiveDocs



Source: <https://docs.memoq.com/current/en/Places/import-sdl-studio-package.html>

- Quality assurance: memoQ offers to check errors (spelling, terminology, formatting, etc.), and this function is also optional. It is a multiple-tool process that detects translation errors and offers to treat some problems. MemoQ's automated quality assurance (QA) module can check the translation in multiple ways, including issues such as numbers, spaces, punctuation marks, term consistency, segment length, and more. Virtually any type of automated checks can be performed on translations by adding regular expression checks.

Figure 2. Quality Assurance



Source: <https://docs.memoq.com/current/en/Places/import-sdl-studio-package.html>

- In-built full memoQ help (in English) with a detailed description of its functions (e.g. how to add documents to the corpus, use advanced filters, auto-correct settings, concordance, confirm and update rows, etc.)
- Integration with Other Tools:

MemoQ seamlessly integrates with various project management tools, content management systems, and collaborative platforms. This integration enhances the efficiency of the project monitoring process by establishing connections between memoQ and external workflows and systems. For example, to draw up an indicative example, memoQ can be integrated with Trados regarding certain functions, such as importing Trados-generated TMX files and enhancing the utilisation.

Figure 3. Memoq help

The screenshot shows the memoQ docs website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, What's New, Places, Things, and Products. Below the navigation bar, a search bar is visible with the text "Search memoQ documentation". A breadcrumb trail indicates the current location: "You are here: Places > Resolve errors and warnings". On the left side, there is a sidebar menu under the heading "Places" with various options like "Add abbreviation", "Add CMS jobs to project", etc. The main content area is titled "Resolve errors and warnings" and contains the following text:

The **Resolve errors and warnings** tab is the place where you can look at all errors and warnings from your project.

Errors and warnings are added to some segments by the quality assurance (QA) mechanism of memoQ. The QA mechanism checks the translations according to the [QA settings](#) of the project.

You can review the errors and warnings in [local projects](#) and in [checkouts of online projects](#).

**How to get here**

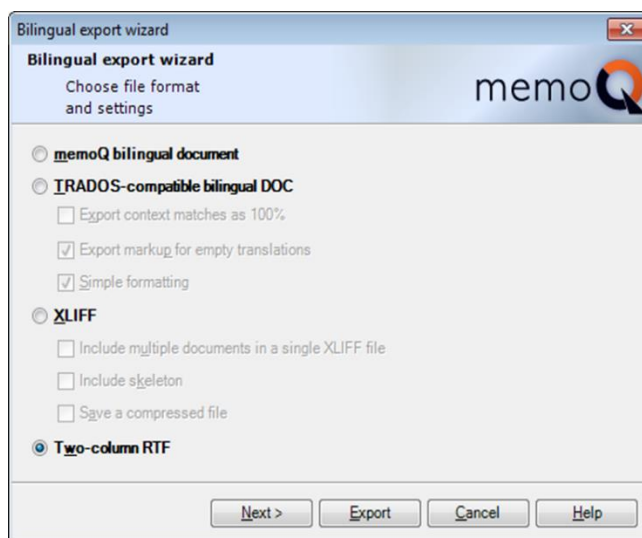
1. [Open a project](#). You may [open a document](#) or two, but this is not necessary.
2. If you need to check the consistency of translations (only then), run the QA module first: On the **Review** ribbon, click [Quality Assurance](#). In the [Run QA](#) window, choose how much of the project is checked, and then click **OK**. memoQ runs the QA checks on the documents. This may take several minutes.

**To learn more:** See Help about the [Run QA](#) window.

3. On the **Review** ribbon, click [Errors And Warnings](#).
4. The [Resolve errors and warnings](#) window opens. Choose a scope. A scope tells

Source: <https://docs.memoq.com/current/en/Places/import-sdl-studio-package.html>

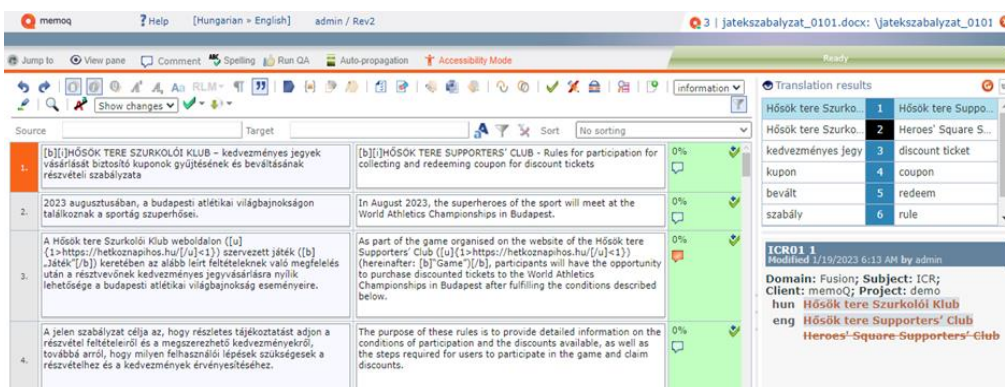
Figure 4. Import SDL Trados Studio package



Source: <https://docs.memoq.com/current/en/Places/import-sdl-studio-package.html>

- Translation grid: the place where you see the source text and type the translation.

Figure 5. The translation grid



Source: <https://docs.memoq.com/current/en/Places/import-sdl-studio-package.html>

The translation grid exhibits structured content, i.e. the source text and the place where the translation is typed. The translator editor shows each translation segment in a separate row, making checking the source and target language pair easy once the translation is complete. On the right-hand side, it offers solutions from documents translated, approved, and quality reviewed previously.

Version updates – memoQ automatically checks for updates and offers them for installation, but the decision is in the hands of the translator. If a new update is found, the Dashboard will display an alert. The translator can find information about

the updates by clicking the Check for Updates window and installing the selected one after closing Memoq. If a translator sticks to the old version, he can still use the previous, well-proven, Memoq tools without limitations – but without the practical innovations that the memoQ developers offer.

The Kilgray company also offers webinars and contracts with academic institutions. The Faculty of Business and Economics, Debrecen University (where the authors are employed), came to an agreement with Kilgray Technologies in 2016. Under the contract, the Institute of Business Communication and Professional Language Studies includes memoQ training for its technical translation students in its “Translation” curriculum. Annually, a professional from Kilgray Technologies travels to Debrecen to visit our Department and provide basic-level memoQ training for our students. The program takes up a whole day, and during the time frame of the whole semester, it is complemented by practising what the students learned at the training. Our students are expected to prepare their diploma translations using the memoq translation tool, and they are granted licences to use the program on their home PCs. The students can use the CAT tool free of charge within their training period of four semesters, and once they leave education, they can buy it at a preferential price (about one-fourth of the original price). It is also the case with educators, who can use memoQ freely on their home and university computers.

## **Summary**

In this paper, we have presented memoQ, one of the best-known and most frequently used streamlined computer-assisted tools for translation purposes, developed by Hungarian IT experts and translators. Integrating CAT tools into translation courses at universities provides a practical and hands-on approach, preparing students for the translation demands and enhancing their employability in specialized industries. By helping to maintain consistency in terminology it ensures accurate and standardised language usage and increases productivity allowing its users to focus on the nuances of specialized language rather than spending excessive time on routine translation tasks. By using memoQ translators can save time and effort, especially when dealing with recurring terms or phrases in specialized texts. Nevertheless, memoQ possesses unique features showcasing its versatility and efficiency in addressing the evolving demands of the translation profession. It is markedly translator-friendly, translators can customise its functions, tools and project management options, and what is of utmost importance: its basic logic shows that translators developed it for translators. The Centre of Business Communication and Professional Language Studies in Debrecen seeks to enhance its future collaboration with Kilgray to improve the quality of its technical translation education, providing opportunities for its students to get a good understanding of this cutting-edge technology in the fast-developing translation environment of our days. In conclusion, memoQ excels in helping students develop translation-related skills that are directly applicable to their future careers in specialised fields and provides a robust platform that not only streamlines translation processes but also contributes to the cultivation of a new generation of skilled and adaptable translators.



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<https://docs.memoq.com/current/en/Places/import-sdl-studio-package.html>  
(Utolsó letöltés: 2024. október 10.)

## MEMOQ, MINT CAT ESZKÖZ INTEGRÁLÁSA A DEBRECENI EGYETEM SZAKFORDÍTÓ KURZUSAIBA

HAJDU ZITA, TAR ILDIKÓ, FARKAS JÁNOS

Ez a tanulmány a memoQ, egy számítógépes fordítóeszköz néhány sajátosságával foglalkozik a Debreceni Egyetem Üzleti Kommunikációs és Szaknyelvi Tanulmányok Központjában folyó fordítóképzés keretében. A szerzők célja, hogy röviden bemutassák a CAT-eszközök fejlődését, a memoQ legfontosabb jellemzőit, valamint a memoQ integrálását az üzleti és gazdasági szakfordítói kurzus tantervébe. A Közgazdaságtudományi Kar Üzleti Kommunikációs és Szaknyelvi Tanulmányok Központja a szakfordítóképzés teljesen új struktúrájának kialakítására törekedett. A hagyományos fordítói készségekre való összpontosítás mellett a cél az volt, hogy a fordítási technikák mélyreható megértését, a mesterséges intelligencia alapú CAT-eszközök használatának képességét biztosítsa, és felkészítse a hallgatókat a globális munkaerőpiac új környezetére, különös tekintettel a fordítóirodák felőli keresletre. A tanulmány a következő kérdéseket tárgyalja: Hogyan hatott a memoQ, egy számítógéppel segített fordítóeszköz integrálása a szakfordító képzési programunkra? A memoQ milyen funkciói segítik a szakfordító-hallgatókat abban, hogy hatékonyabbak, pontosabbak és megbízhatóbbak legyenek, és ezáltal jobban el tudjanak helyezkedni a munkaerőpiacon?

**Kulcsszavak:** CAT-eszközök, memoQ, memoQ legfontosabb funkciói, szakfordító kurzusok, munkaerő-piaci igények