

## **REPORTS:**

### **Nordea's cooperation with DANTERM on language technology tools**

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#### **Group Translation**

When entering into the so-called centre contract with DANTERM three years ago we signed the agreement in the name of Unibank, a major Danish bank. Following a cross-border merger last year, we are now part of a leading Nordic financial services group and the 34 staff of Group Translation, the new group's centralised translation function, are based in each of the four Nordic countries. Our focus has definitely become Nordic rather than Danish and we have got used to the idea that tasks are being sent to us from Helsinki, Stockholm or Oslo just as well as from Copenhagen.

We translate to and from English, Danish, Finnish, Norwegian, Swedish, German and French, and our main duties are:

- Translation of texts that contribute to building Nordea's corporate image or are strategically important or legally binding
- Taking initiatives to make overall linguistic work more efficient and to enhance the quality of international communication by non-professional linguists

#### **Language strategy**

Unibank introduced a language strategy a couple of years ago, according to which all the employees were supposed to handle as much as possible of their international communication themselves, primarily routine correspondence and recurring tasks. The professional translators were to concentrate their resources on the more complicated and important types of text that belonged to the above categories. The prerequisite for this strategy to be successful was that we made

relevant tools available to our colleagues because the policy was still to ensure top quality in all written texts communicated from the bank.

### **How to realise the language strategy**

From the outset we pointed to the need for investing heavily in language technology to enable us to make the necessary linguistic tools available to the rest of the organisation. At the same time the translators needed state-of-the-art technology to be able to meet the intensifying demand for fast high-quality translations.

Targeted language training of existing staff outside the translation department as well as more focus on language qualifications when recruiting new staff were among the recommendations we submitted to the staff and training department. Some of these recommendations are now reflected in the bank's job advertisements.

### **DANTERMcentret takes shape**

Concurrently with the launch of our language strategy, the Danish centre for Terminology - DANTERM - came into existence.

In the autumn of 1998 when the "centre contract project" offered Danish companies the possibility of cooperating with DANTERM on terminology-related issues, we did not hesitate to join the project. We integrated the different elements of our strategy into the project and agreed with DANTERM how to go about the work.

### **The purpose of the contract**

The purpose of entering into the centre contract was to ensure the appropriate structuring of the different data, the development of terminology-related IT applications and also to make sure that our terminology management methods were in line with the correct principles for that kind of work. In addition, we had made a sizeable investment in new software for our termbank and needed assistance in converting the data from the old database to the new system.

We "paid" for the consultancy work delivered by DANTERM by guaranteeing a certain amount of resources being allocated by the bank to the project in the form of man-hours.

### **Technology**

#### ***Why use language technology?***

With the right tools it is possible to ensure consistency in the use of terms and phrases, paving the way for standardisation and quality assurance. A termbank may, for instance, not only show the correct terminology, but also point to

preferred terms to be used in a particular company's communications. In addition, there are the obvious productivity and efficiency gains as described below. Furthermore, language technology tools are useful not just for the professional in-house translators; also all the employees who produce texts in a foreign language will benefit from the advantages offered by such tools.

### ***Translation memory***

Machine translation is not a realistic option for us at the present time or several years ahead. However, we were convinced that we could benefit from the advantages offered by translation memory technology. The productivity and efficiency gains are obvious because such tools would relieve us of time-consuming searches for formulations and terminology in archived work.

### ***Electronic dictionaries***

We had already invested in a few and had decided that in future the purchase of electronic dictionaries would take preference over books in paper form. Due to our language strategy we also had to think of our non-linguistic colleagues and our aim was to install electronic web-based dictionaries on the internet. However, we soon discovered that the market is not ready for that yet, so we have to wait until the relevant dictionaries are available in a web-based form. Instead we decided on a solution together with our IT people to install the dictionaries on different servers across the organisation to enable everybody to get access to them as a standard element of the Office package.

### ***The Internet***

The Internet has become an indispensable tool for us for information retrieval and we often wonder how we actually coped before that possibility existed. To facilitate our search we have organised our favourite websites in a structure reflecting various relevant subjects.

### ***Choice of software***

Some time before the launch of the DANTERM project we had invested in new software for our termbank. Our old database was contained in a DOS-based product and the bank had changed to Microsoft Office, so we had to buy new software. The new termbank software would have to meet the following requirements:

- Compatible with the bank's IT environment (Microsoft products)
- Recognised system enjoying widespread use
- With prospects of future upgrading possibilities
- Compatible with translation memory program (as we had decided to purchase such a program)
- Easy to use

The choice fell on the Trados products MultiTerm for our termbank and Translator's Workbench for the translation memory. We also bought WinAlign for recycling existing translation material and the web-based MultiTerm version for our intranet.

## **Organising the project work**

The two principal elements of the contract project are the termbank and the translation memory, the latter of which we mainly handled ourselves due to a timing difference (when the contract became effective, we had already started using the program).

### ***Termbank***

Thus, the termbank is the central part of the project and a rather complex one, consisting of many sub-elements grouped in a theoretical part and a more practical part:

#### ***Theoretical subjects***

- Organising the data structure (terminology, glossary of words, glossary of phrases)
- Determining the structure of data fields
- Establishing company-specific classification of subjects
- Deciding whether to quality mark terms or assign them different categories or status specifications
- Working out specifications as to terminology management (rules concerning data input and requirements, for instance, as to authoritative sources)
- Making procedures for terminology management (the process and quality check)
- Defining target groups (who is to have access and to what categories of data)

#### ***Practical tasks***

- Converting the old database into MultiTerm
- Adjusting data to new specifications and discarding irrelevant terms

### ***Standardisation***

A third element in the project consisted in the standardisation of legal and other documents and the building up of a database containing standardised phrases in parallel corpora (texts that are translations of each other).

### ***Defining tasks and responsibilities***

Our project being quite ambitious and complex, it was necessary to organise the work in detail, defining all the tasks to be handled and making timetables. Persons to be responsible for the three main areas were appointed. Each of these three was responsible for carrying through the tasks belonging to that area and meeting the deadlines and goals defined.

### ***Involving staff***

All the then 18 staff of the translation department were asked to choose the area in which they took the greatest interest and thus, different working groups were formed. As especially the termbank project was complicated, several subgroups were formed to discuss and make decisions on various issues. Their proposals were presented to and approved by me as the project manager. DANTERMcentret were consulted in the process - sometimes at an early stage, sometimes later, depending on when the need for their advice emerged. But they were always involved in the decision-making process to ensure that the right decisions were made.

No doubt, the delegation of responsibilities and the fact that all the staff were committed to meeting the objectives defined were important factors contributing to the success of the project.

### **Translation memory**

The subproject concerning Translator's Workbench (TW) consisted of fewer details than did the termbank and, knowing that there were less barriers to surpass, we were eager to start using the program. Having all received one day's training, and a few super-users somewhat more, and having established the database structure, we set out to use the system for our translations.

The person responsible for this subproject had written a brief manual and made a trouble-shooter guide giving guidance in situations that might cause problems or where we would seem to get stuck. Also a Frequently Asked Questions list was made to collect all the technical problems we faced, for subsequent presentation to the Trados people.

### ***Alignment***

A student help has done a great task in recycling existing translation material for reuse by the translation memory. With the alignment facility we could ensure that the memory was not empty from the outset and we can reuse old texts previously translated outside the TW.

### ***Concordance***

As the texts we receive for translation are seldom standardised and the writers insist on exercising their creativity, we seldom get a 100% match when using TW. However, we do benefit tremendously from using the concordance function, which enables us to look up terms and phrases in the memory. This means that we only have to search in one place and it only takes a few seconds. TW also offers advantages to translators working in a team since, on an ongoing basis, they can see the terminology used by their colleagues as they go along. This saves some of the necessary coordination work to ensure uniform and correct terminology.

## **Terminology bank**

### ***Data structure and classification***

Before anything else we had to determine the structure of the sets of data and choose what kind of data we wanted the termbank to contain. We decided on a limited number of data fields based on DANTERM's recommendations as well as on our past experience with our old termbank. These data fields were organised according to terminological principles with concept-related data (such as definition, classification and cross reference) at the beginning of the structure, followed by term-related data (such as the translated term, context, grammatical data) and source fields for almost every data field to support the information provided. We devised our own classification that suited the products and subjects relevant to our organisation, at the same time making sure that this classification could fit into the overall pattern of the official Danish DANTERM classification to allow for later standardisation on a national scale, if relevant.

### ***Quality marking or categorisation?***

We discussed whether to assign a quality mark to each term to signal the extent to which we were satisfied with the term, but soon decided that such marking would depend on subjective appraisals, rendering the usefulness quite dubious. Instead we wanted to divide the terms into different categories according to their stage in the process or status: If a term lived up to our requirements as specified, it was designated a "final" status. A term that still lacked certain data to meet the specifications, such as a definition or a context, would bear the designation "unreviewed", indicating that, at some point in time, it would be changed to a "final" term. The third category, "glossary" term was not the result of actual terminology work, but simply a word-to-word translation, as is found in most dictionaries, and the requirements for this category were much less stringent. As an example, no source was needed to support the translation.

### ***Target groups***

Defining the groups to allow access to the termbank and the data fields available to such groups was an easy task. Since we had been assigned the duty to make the necessary technological tools available to the rest of the organisation on the assumption that they were to handle the production of texts in English themselves, we could hardly prevent any part of the organisation from getting access to all the data in the termbank. And so, we decided to open up the database to everybody having access to our intranet.

### ***Procedures and specifications***

We analysed our terminology management process and found that it needed some adjustment to make it more simple and smooth and to facilitate the work by removing some of the previous barriers (stiff rules for quality check), yet ensuring the quality. As we had renewed the data structure completely, it was also necessary to rewrite our manual or guidelines for inputting terms. The guidelines contain

specifications of various kinds, ranging from how to fill in the fields to what is regarded as an authoritative source.

### ***Converting the old database to new software***

This proved to be a tremendous task and a lengthy process. Fortunately, DANTERMcentret offered their assistance in the actual physical conversion of the data, which required expert knowledge. The subsequent fine adjustment of the industry-specific data, checking synonyms and cross-references, adding classifications and categories was something we did ourselves. In this process we took the opportunity to fine-tune the contents and remove some old irrelevant terms, improving the quality of the data content here and there.

### **Termbank on the intranet**

We were about to start implementing the launch of our termbank on the intranet when a new version of the MultiTerm web-based software was announced to be marketed soon. Naturally, we wanted to have state-of-the art technology for our termbank, so we wanted to wait for the new version. In the meantime, something else happened .....

### **Cross-border merger to form Nordea**

Last year, Unibank became part of a major Nordic financial services group - Nordea. Suddenly, the number of languages used by the group proliferated and the source language was no longer Danish only. Source and target languages now varied among Danish, English, Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish, and the number of translators in the centralised department grew from 18 to 34.

It is obvious that our termbank has to become a multilingual Nordic database because the target group consists of people from four nations speaking four different languages plus English. Making the necessary extension to the database will constitute a major challenge to us - and DANTERMcentret - in 2001 and this will be the last assignment linked to the "centre contract". The first job to do is to install the Trados products in each of the other Nordic capitals and to train the staff in their use. Then we have to change the Danish guidelines, specifications, classifications and categories into English, which is the only language all the translators, and other staff for that matter, share as a common language. In future, when adding new terminology, we have to write all the information in the joint fields (eg grammar and categories) in English. And each set of data fields will be extended to include the same data fields in the other Nordic languages.

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## **ABSTRACT**

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A couple of years ago Unibank introduced a language strategy, according to which all the employees were supposed to handle as much as possible of their international communication themselves, primarily routine correspondence and recurring tasks. The professional translators were to concentrate their resources on the more complicated and important types of text that belonged to the categories: contribute to building Nordea's corporate image, strategically important or legally binding..

To ensure the success of this strategy the translators assumed the task of making relevant tools available to the rest of the organisation because the policy was still to ensure top quality in all written texts communicated from the bank.

Realising the strategy required heavy investments in language technology. At the same time the translators needed state-of-the-art technology to meet the intensifying demand for fast high-quality translations.

The cooperation entered into with DANTERM - the Danish centre for terminology - was primarily to ensure the appropriate structuring of data in the new terminology bank and translation memory as well as the application of proper terminology management methods.

As the project was quite ambitious and complex, the work had to be organised in detail, tasks defined and timetables made. All the staff of the translation department were involved in the project and DANTERM was consulted on an ongoing basis.

Well into the process of the project, Unibank became part of a major Nordic financial services group - Nordea. As a result of this merger, the terminology bank will now have to be enlarged to comprise three other Nordic languages and this will constitute the final major task and challenge in the cooperation with DANTERM.

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