

Some Important Features of Two Computer-assisted Translation Tools: Wordfast and SDL Trados Studio

Aesha Al-Hammar

Department of English, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Omar Al-Mukhtar University, Derna City, Libya

Corresponding Author: Aesha Al-Hammar, E-mail: aesha_de2008@yahoo.com

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, I will attempt to examine the features and functions of two tools in an analytical and comparative way. My focus will be on comparing and commenting on various features of their translation memory tools, such as matching functions, operational functions, alignment, etc. Through my experience with Wordfast and SDL Trados Studio, I found it very easy to use and to become familiar with SDL Trados. There are benefits and drawbacks to working with the TMs of both tools. In contrast

to SDL Studio TM, Wordfast TM is very complicated to handle. In conjunction with my language pair, I found translating an HTML file with Wordfast complicated and time-consuming.

KEYWORDS

Wordfast, SDL Trados Studio,
TM, templates

Introduction

Computer-assisted translation tools (CAT) are a vital technology for translators. Wordfast and SDL Trados Studio are CAT tools that are used to simplify the work of the translator and also provide many different techniques by reducing the repetition of work using automatic terminology lookups such as the Wordfast glossary and the SDL Multiterm. Wordfast and SDL Trados Studio present various features for different language sets and each tool has its advantages and disadvantages. The weaknesses and strengths of the two tools are different for each translator in terms of the language pair that is used in the translation.

In general, Wordfast and SDL Trados Studio play a key role in the localization industry. According to Esselink (2000), translation memory tools have been common in software localization and this is due to the short life cycle of websites and software products. Wordfast and SDL Studio Trados work better for some files than others, and neither works perfectly on any file. In addition, Wordfast is available online so that a translator can download it easily.

In the conclusion, I will present my opinion on which tool is simplest for use by freelance translators who are using the language pair English-Arabic. My recommendations will be based on how the two translation tools work on three different types of files—HTML, MS Word and PPT—and which one is the most effective and easy to deal for my language pair.

Key features of Wordfast

A translator using Wordfast has access to many functions. It has a toolbar which includes different icons, and each one has a different function.

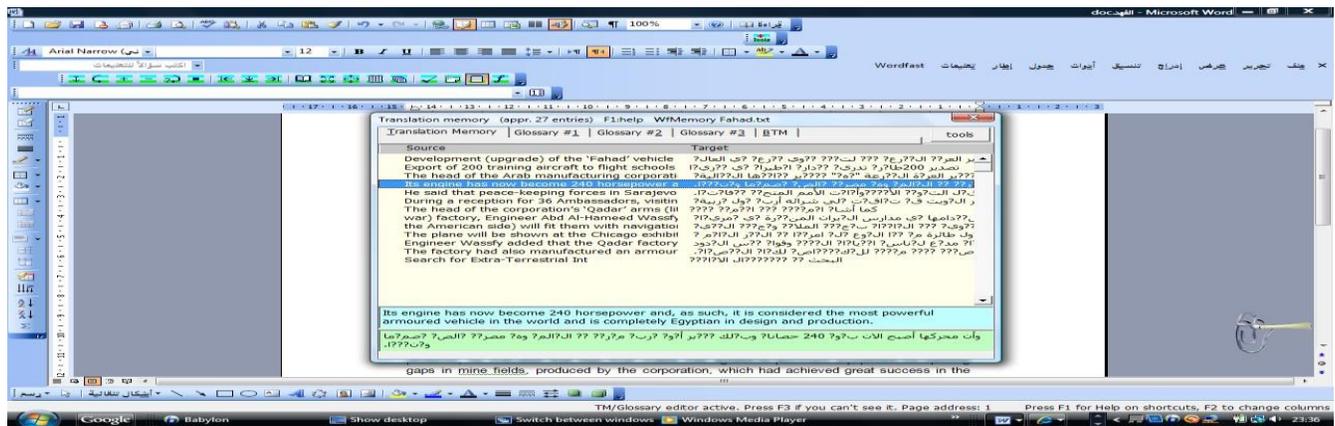
With Wordfast, the translator can prepare the working environment using the following steps: opening a new TM by clicking on the Wordfast icon, then choosing the translation memory tab, clicking on a new translation memory

and then giving ISO codes for the source and the target languages. The TMX files that are created in other CAT tools, such as Trados, can be used in Wordfast, and TM from Wordfast can also be used in other tools by using special filters that export TM as TMX. There is another operation that should be applied before exporting TM for use in another project. This operation helps to reorganise and index TM and can be performed by selecting the Reorganise tab from the Translation memory menu.

Moreover, Fuzzy Terminology Recognition (FTR), which can be used by adding '*' at the end of the words, allows Wordfast to search for various forms of the word or expression. Creating a glossary in Wordfast is an easy task. A Wordfast glossary is a tab-delimited text file of two or three columns that can be created in Excel or Notepad and should be saved as Unicode. It is very useful to select the option of QC (quality check) from the Terminology settings dialogue box. This helps to validate the equivalent target term with the source term.

Wordfast uses colour-coded boxes. Green means that an exact match was found in the TM, yellow refers to a partial match, and finally grey means that no match was found. It is best to work on a copy of the file that needs to be translated because the original source document will be overwritten by the target one. To translate a document with Wordfast, the translator simply opens the copy of the file in Wordfast; in contrast, with Excel and PPT files, s/he opens a blank Wordfast document and press Alt+down, and Wordfast automatically copies the source segment into Word. After finishing and proofreading the translation, another step should be taken: cleaning up the translation to delete all the segmentation marks from the source and the target texts. This can be done easily by selecting Tools from the Wordfast dialogue box and clicking on the Clean-up button. Wordfast TM should be saved as Unicode to avoid the problem of question marks appearing in the TM and the new target texts. Translating English-Arabic MS Word and PPT files with Wordfast can be done successfully without any major problems.

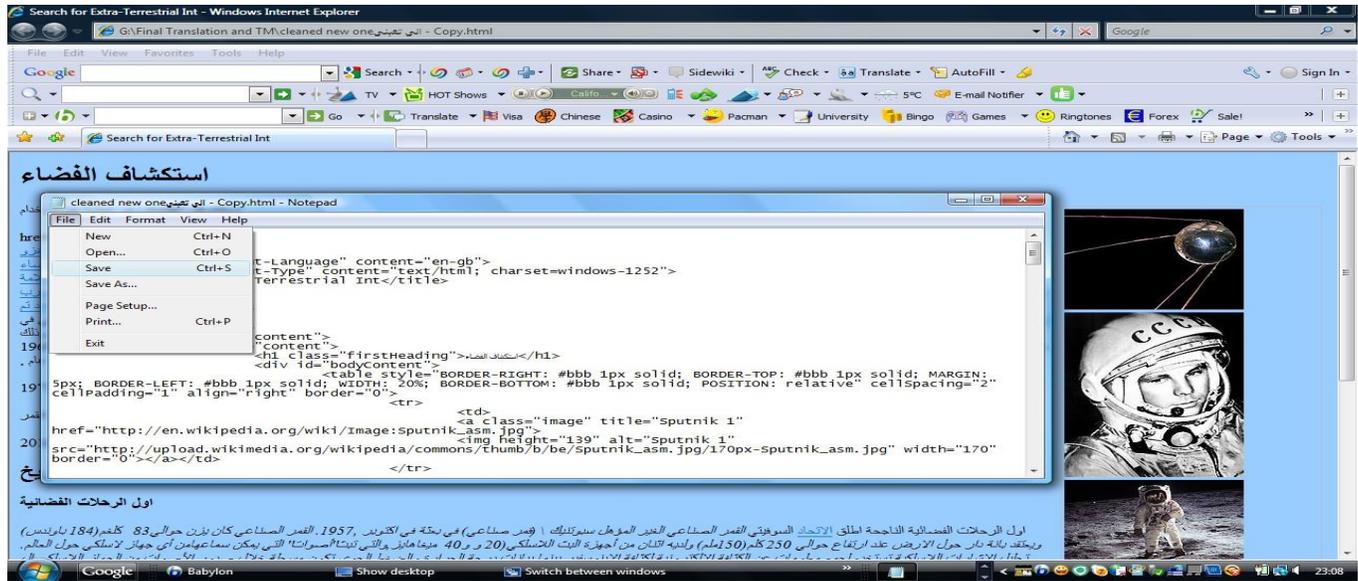
Figure 1 The TM when it has not been saved in Unicode.



The most complicated file to translate with Wordfast is an HTML file. Using my pair language, I found it very difficult to translate this type of file. To translate an HTML file, a translator should work on a copy of the HTML file and replace .html with .txt, and Plustools should be added in Templates and Add-ins to be able to run the Tweak function. This changes the form of the file from .txt format to .doc format; HTML tagger should also be selected. To avoid having Latin characters in the final translated file, the file should be saved as UTF8.

Even though I did not ignore this vital step, my translation still had segmentations marks. I managed to solve this problem by opening the target text page and right-clicking on the mouse, then selecting View Source and carefully deleting the segmentations marks. After that, I saved the changes and closed the Notepad (Figure 2). After right-clicking on the mouse and selecting refresh, the translation was fine.

Figure 2



Figures 3 and 4 show the translation before and after changes. I could not find a solution for aligning the headings and sub-headings to the right.

Figure 3

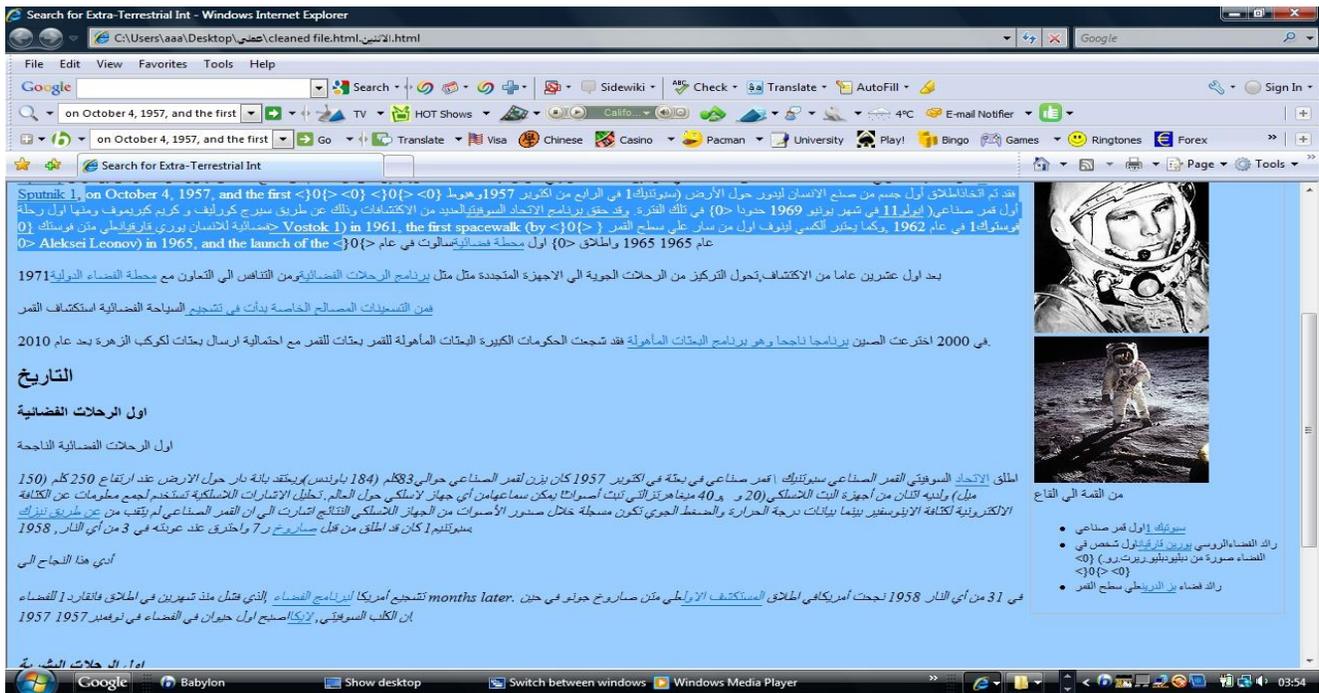
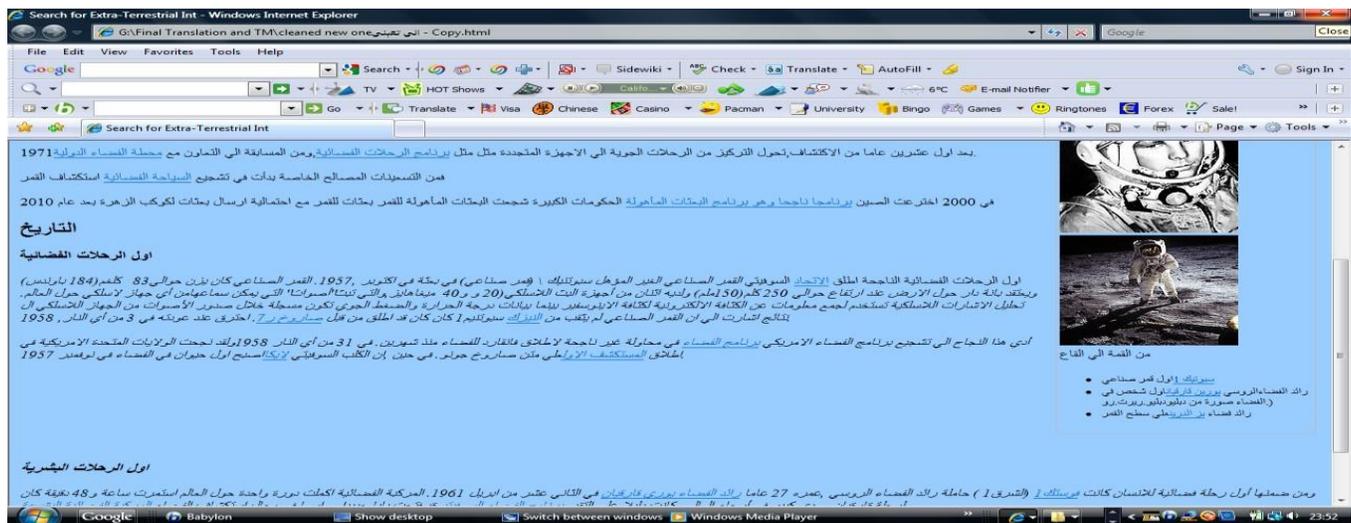


Figure 4.

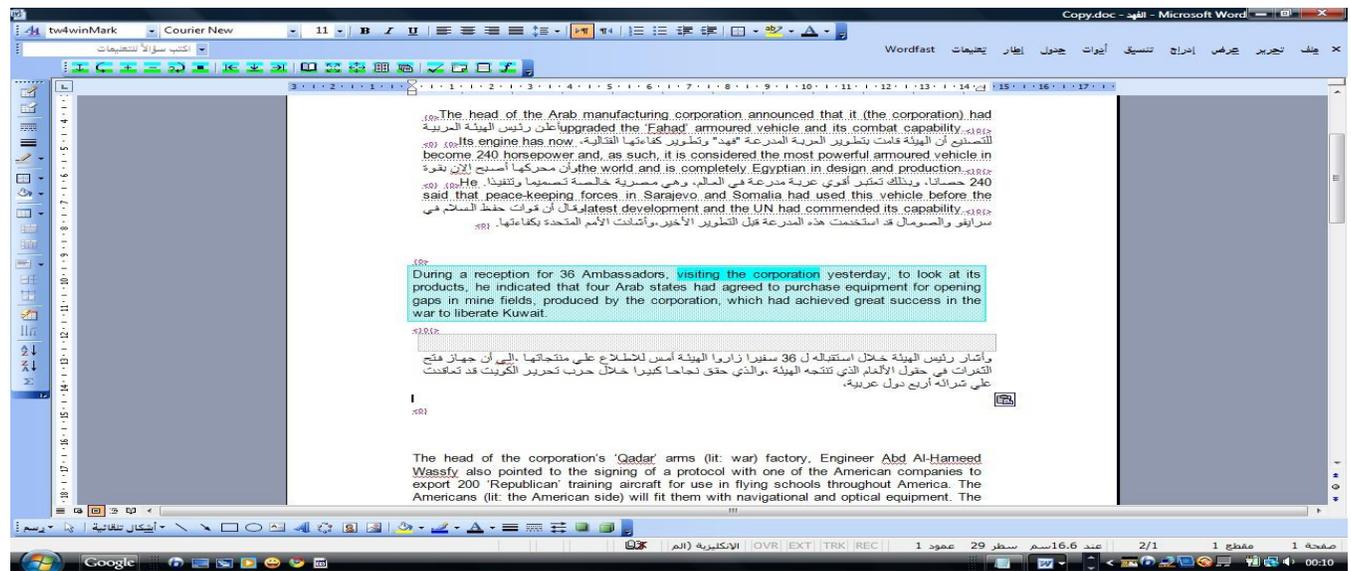


Another function that both SDL Trados Studio and Wordfast offer is adding terms to the Wordfast glossary or to Multiterm during the translation. With Wordfast, the translator can search for a word in TM by selecting the source word or the target word and clicking on the Context search icon; automatically, all the corresponding terms in the TM will appear.

Another minor problem translators could face is when they already have a target text for a source text and want to copy it from the file and paste into the target text segment. The text is not pasted into the segment; it is pasted outside of it.

Possible solutions are writing the first letter from the target text and then pasting the rest or copying and pasting sentence by sentence.

Figure 5 When pasting from translated material, the translation is pasted outside of the target text segment.



Wordfast and SDL Trados Studio allow the translator to make a TM from previously translated documents. According to Austermuhl (2001), the source and the target texts are examined by the alignment tool to identify which pairs match each other. To do this with Wordfast, copy the two files (source and target), select the align tab from the Plus tools window and then click on Start Alignment. After finishing the process of aligning, select Create TM from the Plus Tools window. With SDL Trados, a translator can create a new alignment by clicking on New Project, naming it by replacing the given name and selecting the SL and TL. Select the source file, click Add and repeat with the target file. Click Align File Names and then click the Alignment Tab. To start the process, click on the Structure Recognition tab and then click ok. In order to align the files, select Align File Pairs from the Alignment menu, then Alignment and then Align pairs. To correct misalignments, left-click on the icon that is next to the segment and select disconnect. Now the alignments are ready to be exported. To import them into an existing or a new TM, click on File, select Export File Pair and finally save in .txt format.

Key features of SDL Trados Studio

SDL Trados Studio(2010-2013) has all the functions that Wordfast has such as the glossary (Multiterm), Quality Checking, Fuzzy Terminology Recognition, and Translation Memory. There are six different views in SDL Studio and each one has a different function:

- 1-The Home view, which allows the use of repeatedly used functions.
- 2-The Projects view, which is used to create, track and manage projects.
- 3-The Files view, for opening, managing and batching processing files.
- 4-The Reports view shows the reports of the project.
- 5-The Editor view is for translating and reviewing files.
- 6-The Translation Memories view is for creating and maintaining Translation Memories.

It is very easy to create a new project by selecting File, then New, then Project; the New Project wizard will then open. The translator that follows steps such as choosing the SL and the TL, naming the project, creating the Translation Memory and adding a Termbase.

Using the Editor view, the translator can open a file for translation by following a few steps such as selecting the file from the Files view, then selecting 'Open for Translation'. The source and the target segments face each other, with the ST on the left and the TT on the right. Moreover, each segment is numbered so it is easy to copy-and-paste text. A previewing choice is available for seeing how the translation is working by viewing the ST, TT or both. This facility works well with translating a Word document but not with PPT or HTML files. An error will appear or the message 'there is no preview' (Figures 6 and 7).

Figure 6

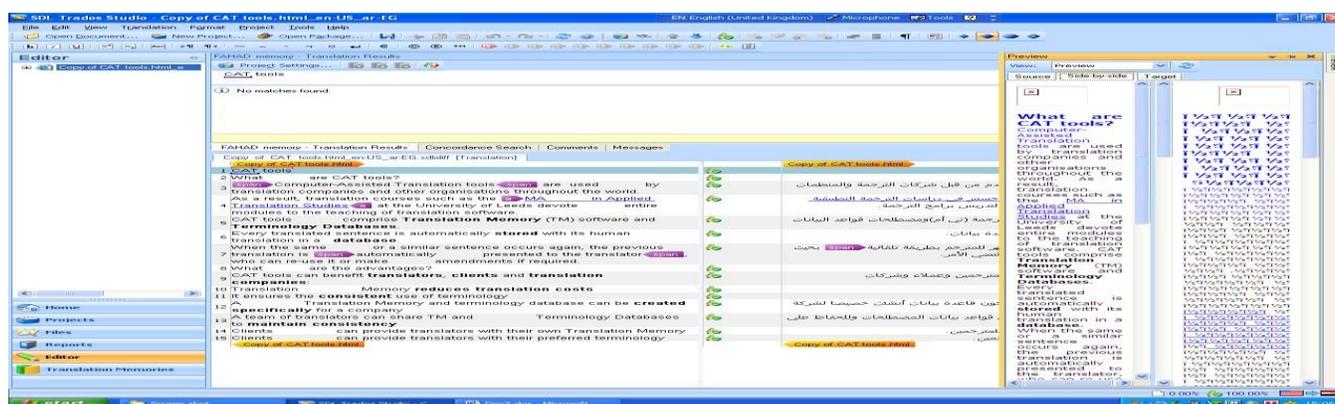
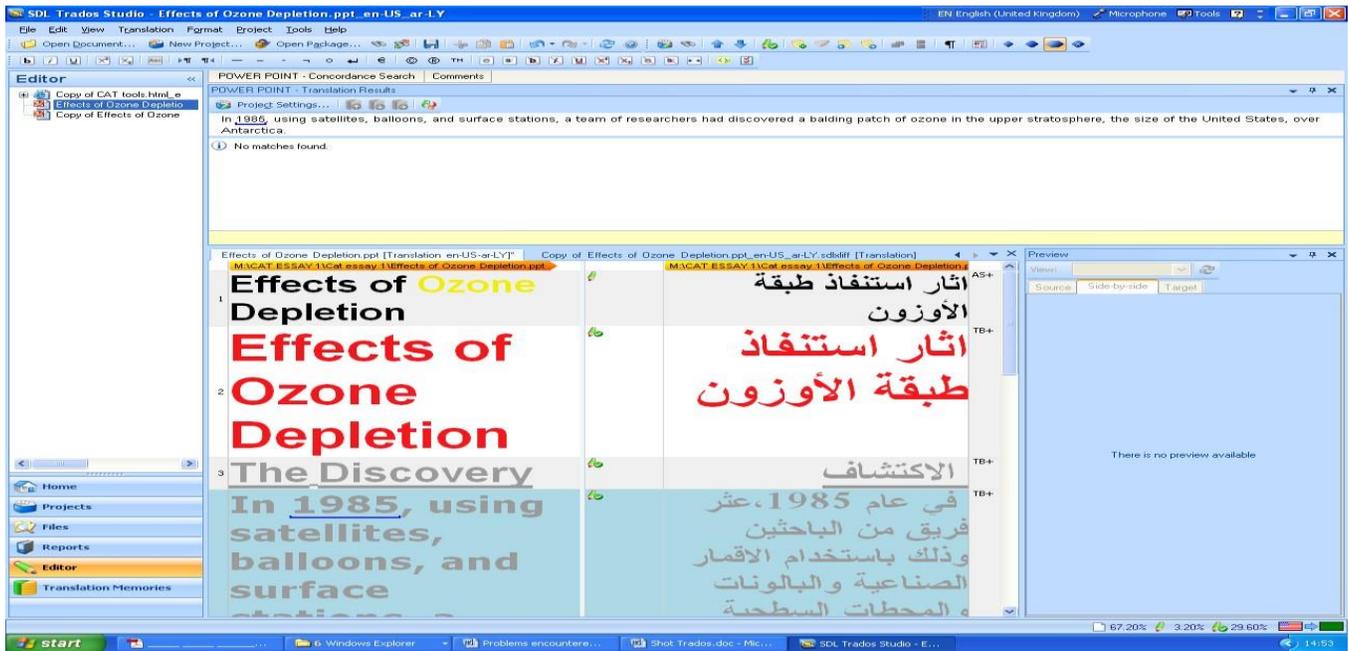
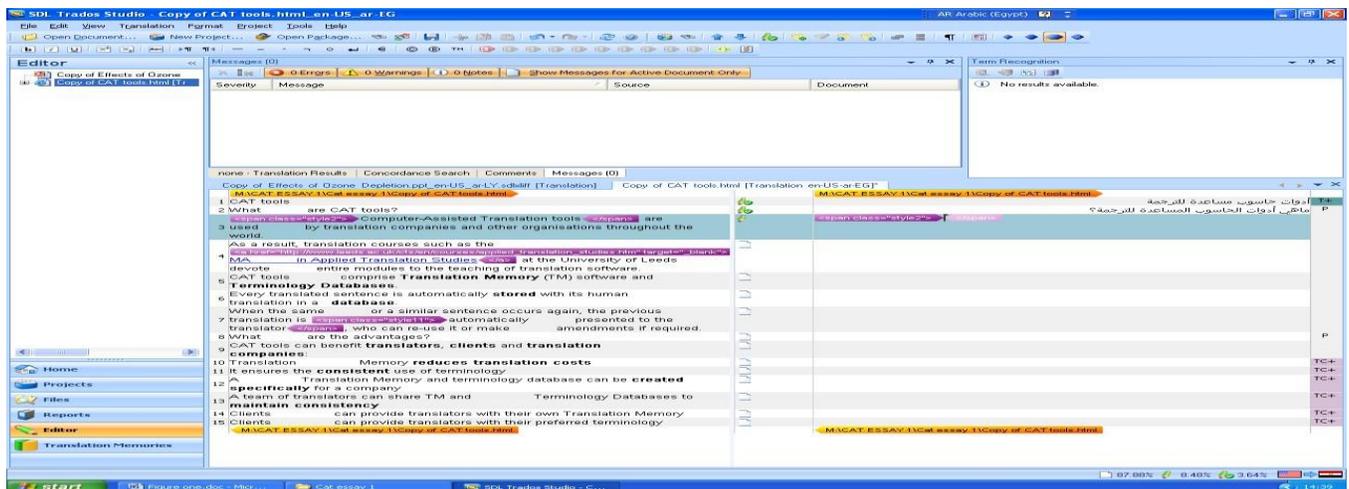


Figure 7



When I translated an HTML file with Trados, I encountered a problem when I wanted to place the SL tags into the TL segment. The tags appeared in different colours, which I found confusing. I solved this by pressing Ctrl+ comma to display the list of placeables and then selecting the same tag that appeared in a different colour, and then the colour will appear the same in both segments. The figure below shows the different colours. Figure 8 shows the colours of the different tags.

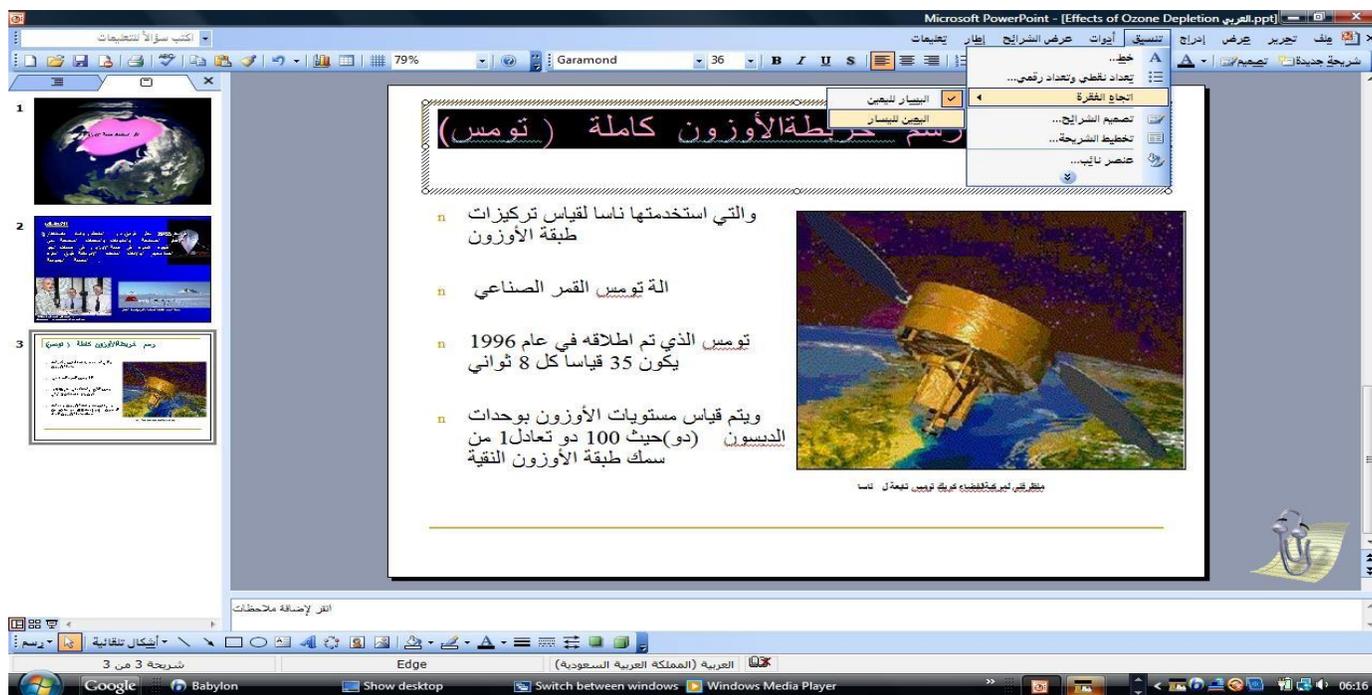
Figure 8



When translating EN-AR PPT with Trados, I faced the problem that the translation and the bullet points were aligned to the left as in English, not to the right as in Arabic. I solved this problem by highlighting the text that needed to be aligned to the right, clicking on Format at the top of the work pane, then Paragraph, and then selecting right to left.

To align the slides to the right, I clicked on View, then selected view direction, then right to left as shown below in Figure 9.

Figure 9



Conclusion

Through my experience with Wordfast and SDL Trados Studio, I found it very easy to use and to become familiar with SDL Trados. There are benefits and drawbacks to working with the TMs of both tools. In contrast to SDL Studio TM, Wordfast TM is very complicated to manage. With my language pair, I found translating an HTML file with Wordfast complicated and time-consuming.

On the other hand, translating the three files I mentioned above was easier with Trados. I translated them without facing any major problems with the TM—just a few problems that could be solved, such as the alignment in translating PPT and the error with the preview display in translating HTML and PPT files. With all the advantages and disadvantages of the two different tools I mentioned above, I would recommend SDL Trados to freelance and in-house project managers whose language pair is English-Arabic because, as I mentioned before, it is not very complicated to handle.

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