Lesson 2: Terminology

Lesson overview

Screen 1

Welcome	Screen
If you want to create clear and consistent technical documentation, then terminology is a great place to start. In this lesson, we will look at why terminology is important, and we will learn how to create a simple terminology list in Excel.	

Screen 2

Objectives	Screen
On completion of this lesson, you will be able to: • Explain the difference between a product glossary and terminology • List three benefits of maintaining terminology and using it consistently • Create a simple terminology list in Excel	

Lesson Content

What is terminology? What is a glossary?	Screen
So, what exactly is terminology and how is it different to a glossary? • The primary purpose of a product glossary is to provide explanations of the terms it contains. For this reason, glossaries are generally monolingual. • A terminology reference may also contain explanations for individual terms (and it's useful if it does), but its primary purpose is to describe the vocabulary to be used for a product or subject area. In most cases, terminology will be maintained for multiple languages.	

Why is terminology important?	Screen
As we saw in the previous lesson, consistency is essential if you want to write clear content that can be easily understood, and easily handled in translation memory tools such as Trados Studio. • Maintaining a terminology reference helps you produce consistent and clear content in all supported languages. • It eliminates doubt, and so helps writers and translators work more quickly. • It can facilitate legal compliance in regulated industries. • And, because it increases consistency, it also increases the leverage from translation memory tools, saving you time and money.	

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Screen 3

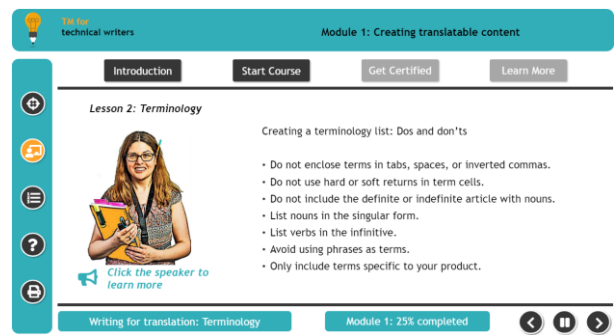| Terminology best practices	Screen
- Acronyms may be required for your specialist field, so to avoid confusion, always provide a glossary with your content as a reference. - The same applies for specialist terms – if your product requires specific terms that are not standard in your industry, include these in your glossary, too. - We were all told at school to use variety when writing our essays. The opposite is true though in technical documentation. If you want your readers, and your translators, to understand your text, only ever use one term for one concept. Referring to a "fixation screw" as a "bone screw", an "insertion pin" or a "fixation device" all within the same document is guaranteed to cause confusion. It can also severely impact the leverage from your translation memory tool. - Translators generally speak the source language that they translate from at an advanced level. But it may not be their native language. So, it is good practice to avoid idiomatic expressions. - Finally, mind your spelling. Consistent and correct spelling not only makes a professional impression, it also maximizes the leverage from your translation memory tool.	

Screen 4

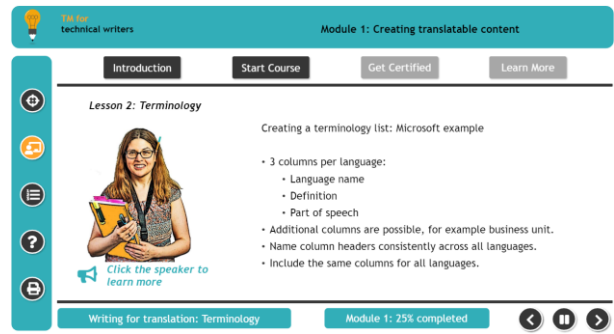| Creating a terminology list: Tools	Screen
So, now that we know what terminology is, and how to use it, it's time to create a basic terminology list. Excel is the best choice here. That's because it supports advanced filtering and sorting of data. And, an Excel list can be automatically converted to a terminology database or termbase for use with the Trados Studio translation memory tool.	

Screen 5

Creating a terminology list: Dos and don'ts	Screen
For successful conversion and use in Trados Studio, the conversion tool and Trados Studio must be able to detect terms properly. Here are some do's and don'ts that will help you maintain terminology that supports this type of automated processing: • Do not enclose your terms in tabs, or spaces, or inverted commas • Do not use hard or soft returns in term cells • In the case of nouns, do not include the definite or indefinite article • List nouns in the singular form only • List verbs in the infinitive • Avoid using phrases as terms • And finally, only include terms specific to your product – this makes the list easy to maintain and speeds up term recognition	

Screen 6

Creating a terminology list	Screen
Microsoft maintains terminology in multiple languages and their list is a good model to follow. • For each language, they include just 3 columns: the language name, a definition, and the part of speech. • You can set up your terminology list in the same way. Or you can add information, for example, if your company has different business units with slightly different terminology, you can indicate the business unit in a separate column. This provides context to translators in Trados Studio. • Remember to name the column headers consistently across all languages. This is important for the conversion process. • It is also important to include the same columns for all languages, even if translations are not yet available. As you can see here, definitions are provided in English, but not in French. We will look at how to convert our Excel list to a termbase in Module 2 of this course.	

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Screen 7

Closing	Screen
So that's it. If your company doesn't already maintain product terminology, I hope that this lesson will inspire you to get started. There's lots of other inspiration out there, too. • Like Microsoft, SAP also maintain a comprehensive online terminology database, as do the IEC and even the UN. • There are also numerous monolingual glossaries online maintained by reputable companies such as Intel, Siemens and Google. • So, if you are just starting with terminology, you definitely don't need to start from scratch. I've included some additional resources in the Learn More section. You can take a look at these as soon as you have completed this module.	

Lesson Summary

Summary	Screen

• Using terms inconsistently or without context makes content difficult to understand and to translate.
• Avoid idiomatic expressions.
• Consistent and correct spelling makes a professional impression and maximizes leverage from your translation memory tool.
• Maintaining terminology:
   o Enables consistent and clear content in all supported languages
   o Increases the leverage from translation memory tools, saving you time and money	

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