



## GeekSpeak

Jost Zetsche

jzetsche@internationalwriters.com

### One Sweet Box of Chocolate

The GeekSpeak column has two goals: to inform the community about technological advances and at the same time encourage the use and appreciation of technology among translation professionals. Jost also publishes a free technical newsletter for translators ([www.internationalwriters.com/toolkit](http://www.internationalwriters.com/toolkit)).

**After** going through my GeekSpeak columns from the past few years, I realized that I have never even mentioned one of my most beloved tools: ApSIC Xbench! (I did not say that its name is my favorite feature!)

If you would like to do something with (almost) any file that has been processed in a translation environment tool (TEnT), this might be your new box of chocolates. But unlike what Forrest Gump's mama always said, with this tool you will know what you are gonna get—and it is gonna be good.

The sweet idea is that you can load a large number of TEnT-specific files into Xbench, search them, export them into text or TMX (translation memory exchange) formats, or perform quality checks on them. And when I say a large number of file formats, this is what I mean:

- Tab-delimited text files (\*.txt)
- XLIFF files (\*.xlf, \*.xlif, \*.xliff)
- TMX memories (\*.tmx)
- TBX/MARTIF glossaries (\*.xml, \*.tbx, \*.mtf)
- Trados exported memories (\*.txt), MultiTerm 5 glossaries (\*.txt), MultiTerm XML glossaries (\*.xml), TagEditor files (\*.ttx), Word uncleaned files (\*.doc, \*.rtf), Trados Studio files (\*.sdlxliff, \*.sdlproj)
- SDLX ITD files (\*.itd), translation memories (\*.mdb)
- STAR Transit 2.6/XV directory tree
- PO files (\*.po)

- IBM TranslationManager/OpenTM2 exported dictionaries (\*.sgm), installed and exported folders (\*.fxp), exported translation memories (\*.exp)
- Wordfast memories (\*.txt), glossaries (\*.txt)
- Wordfast Pro TXML files
- Déjà Vu X/Idiom files (\*.wsprj, \*.dvprj), translation memories (\*.wstm, \*.dvmdb)
- Logoprot RTF files (\*.rtf)
- Microsoft software glossaries (\*.csv)
- Mac OS X glossaries (\*.ad)

If you do not know what some of these formats are, do not fret. Once you encounter a bilingual file format, simply check to see whether it is part of this list and, chances are, it will be.

For each of these formats the same thing applies: you can load them into Xbench—depending on the size of the file(s), the initial loading process might take a minute or two—but once they are loaded, Xbench runs in the background and allows you to search the content of these files from within any Windows application. All you need to do is highlight a word or a phrase, press the CTRL+ALT+INSERT key combination, and within milliseconds, the tool can search hundreds of thousands of lines to show you the appropriate matches.

If you find a certain set of formats hard to work with, or if your TEnT does not support a certain format, export the loaded files to TMX. Your tool will support that. They all do.

Or, just as easily, you can perform quality checks on all of these formats. What are quality checks? These are

essentially checks for formal errors that a computer can easily identify. These include untranslated segments, segments with inconsistent translations, segments with an identical source and target, segments with tag or numerical errors, or segments with double spaces. It is also possible to upload a glossary and check the usage of the terms in the glossary against what was used in the project (depending on how flexion-happy your languages are, this feature might or might not work well). It is also now possible to load dictionaries to spell-check your files.

Is this just a tool for the über-geek? The three or four different language services providers for which I have worked within the past month or so that required the use of Xbench did not seem to think so. They treated it almost on equal footing with Microsoft Word or a browser.

Before the latest version of Xbench was released, the development team actually queried the translation community about what kinds of formats were still needed, and as far as I know, virtually all wishes were granted (mine was!). No wonder, the doubters might say, considering the ridiculous prices that we pay for software nowadays. Well, not for this tool. Amazingly, it is (still) free!

You can find this sweet treasure box at [www.apsic.com/en/products\\_xbench.html](http://www.apsic.com/en/products_xbench.html). You might also want to attend Riccardo Schiaffino's presentation on Xbench at this year's ATA Annual Conference in Boston (LT-9 "Xbench: A Free Tool for Terminology and Quality Assurance"). And, as my buddy Forrest says, that is all I have to say about that.

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