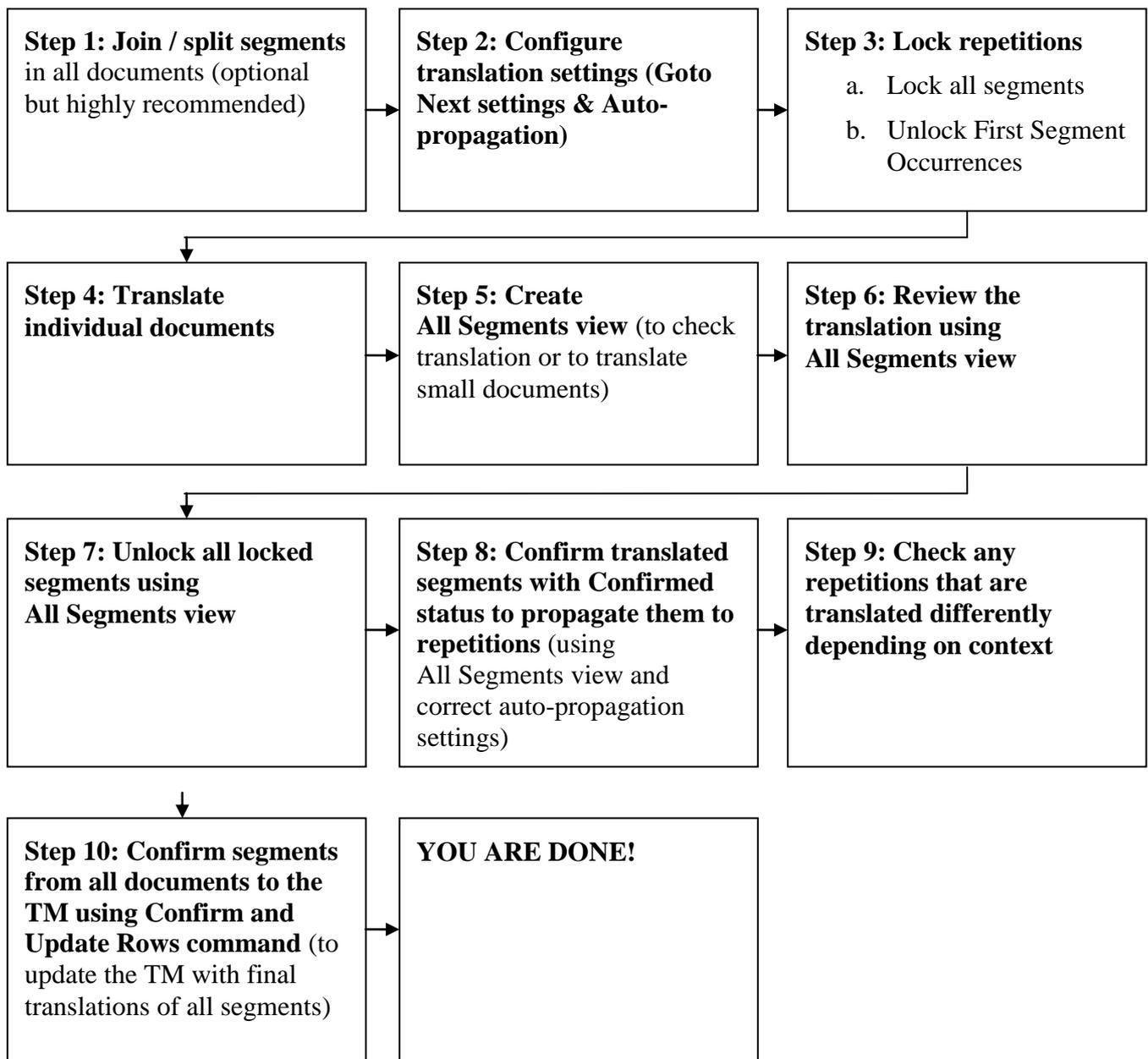# Translating projects with highly repetitive content in memoQ

By Stanislav Okhvat ([TransTools](#)) and [SafeTex](#)

Normally, when you translate a project containing multiple documents, you translate each document in turn and then perform checking / proofreading of each document or the whole project. However, this is not the best strategy for projects that contain a lot of repetitions.

Workflow Overview: Translating projects with highly repetitive content in memoQ

Step 1: Join / split segments in all documents (optional but highly recommended)	**Step 2: Configure translation settings (Goto Next settings & Auto-propagation)**	**Step 3: Lock repetitions** a. Lock all segments b. Unlock First Segment Occurrences
Step 4: Translate individual documents	**Step 5: Create All Segments view** (to check translation or to translate small documents)	**Step 6: Review the translation using All Segments view**
Step 7: Unlock all locked segments using All Segments view	**Step 8: Confirm translated segments with Confirmed status to propagate them to repetitions** (using All Segments view and correct auto-propagation settings)	**Step 9: Check any repetitions that are translated differently depending on context**
Step 10: Confirm segments from all documents to the TM using Confirm and Update Rows command (to update the TM with final translations of all segments)	**YOU ARE DONE!**	

Difficulties in translation of projects with lots of repetitions

If you employ the traditional approach when translating a project with highly repetitive content, your main problems will start towards the end of the project as you begin polishing the translation and performing various checks:

- **Manual correction**
  - If you find a better translation for a specific segment and make a correction inside the current document, the correction will only be applied throughout the current document (if propagation is enabled). If identical segments appear in other documents in the project, they will not be corrected. You will need to correct them manually as well.

- **Spell-checking**
  - Spell-checking can only be performed from each individual document. If the project contains many documents, this may take a lot of time.
  - If the Spell Check command finds an error in a repetitive segment, you will also need to correct the same error in each repetition of this segment.

- **Replacement (manual or automatic)**
  - If you run Find and Replace command from each individual document, you may spend a lot of time.
  - To perform replacements in a multi-document project, it is much better to use *List Results* option in the *Find and Replace* dialogue and click *Replace All* button – this will display *Find and Replace* tab with a list of all segments where the text is found. This will allow you to review each occurrence and replace only the ones you need. However, with lots of repetitions this list may be very large and you may find yourself reviewing identical segments again and again. You can confirm a corrected segment from the *Find and Replace* tab (using the Confirm command), but the change is not auto-propagated to other repetitions of the segment.

- **Quality Assurance (QA)**

  When you perform **QA**, memoQ displays *Resolve Errors and Warnings* tab which lists all the identified problems. However, if you correct a segment under Resolve Errors and Warnings tab and confirm it (using the Confirm command), <u>the correction will not propagate to other repetitions of the same segment</u>. This means that you will need to correct the same problem for each repetition as well. This may cause all sorts of problems: 1) you may forget to correct a single repetition and it may be written to the final TM at the end of the project or even become propagated to already corrected segments, introducing errors into your final translation and the TM(s); 2) failing to correct a problem in a single occurrence of a repetitive segment introduces translation inconsistency.

  When you work on large projects, it also tends to be in sessions and you may well not be able to correct all occurrences of a repeat segment in one session. If you then save your work by confirming all segments, which seems the natural thing to do NOT to lose your changes, the last uncorrected repeat segment overwrites all previous repeat segments in the TM (as it is last), so changes made to the TM are actually lost at the end of a session, at least in the TM.

Acronyms and definitions

TM	Translation Memory	
TU	Translation Unit	One record (row) in a Translation Memory

QA	Quality Assurance
First Segment Occurrence	The first occurrence of every segment, which includes segments that occur only once AND the first occurrences of repetitive segments.
	For example, in a project with 3 segments where the first two segments are identical and the third segment is different from the first two segments, there will be only 2 *first segment occurrences*: segments 1 and 3:

1. My segment.
2. My segment.
3. Another segment.

Repetition

First segment occurrences
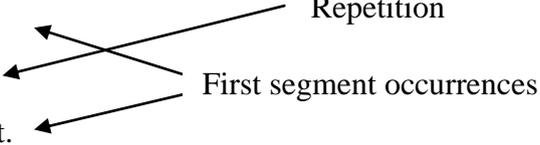
Repetition	A segment which already occurred earlier in a set of documents. For example, if a segment repeats 3 times, the 1st occurrence (First Segment Occurrence) does not count as a repetition, and the remaining 2 segments are considered to be repetitions.

How to solve the problem

To translate a project with a lot of repetitions, follow these guidelines:

Step 1.   Join / split segments in documents as required.

After you have imported the documents to translate, go through each document and try to split or join segments properly.

If wrong segmentation is caused by an unrecognised abbreviation, use Add Abbreviation command with "Resegment this document now" checkbox, or, alternatively, add appropriate abbreviations to the project's segmentation rules and re-import the document(s). By correcting segmentation early, you will be able to avoid issues associated with splitting and joining segments later on.

Because it is often impossible to ensure 100% correct segmentation before the actual translation, the purpose of this step is to find obvious segmentation problems and fix them. This will streamline the work process during the subsequent stages.

Step 2.   Configure translation settings properly

### Step 2a. Configure Goto Next settings to skip locked segments when a segment is confirmed

As you translate documents, you will need to jump between unlocked segments in order to skip locked segments (repetitions) and speed up translation. To do this, you need to configure Automatic Lookup and Insertion settings correctly:

- Open Automatic Lookup And Insertion settings dialogue:
  - in memoQ 2014 R2 and newer versions: select Translation tab and click Translation Settings -> Automatic Lookup And Insertion.
  - in memoQ 2014 and older versions: click Translation -> Automatic Lookup and Insertion…

- Check *Automatically proceed to process further settings…* checkbox as shown below:
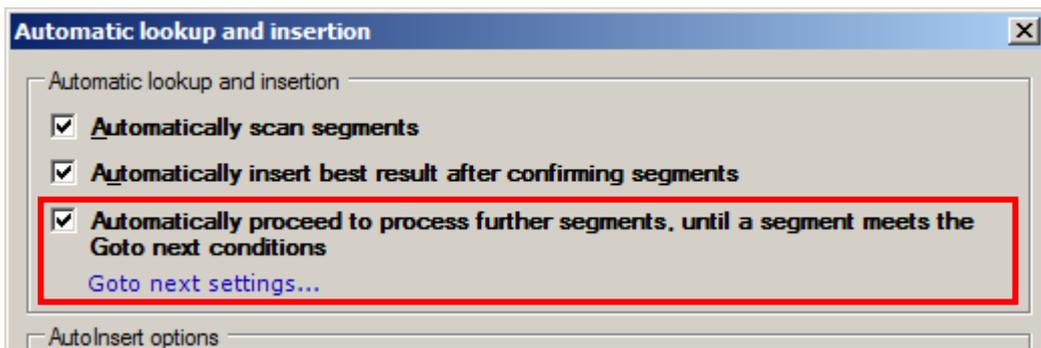
- Click *Goto next settings…* link below to configure Goto Next settings.

- In the Goto Next Settings dialogue, switch to *Status* tab and select *Only unlocked rows* option and other options as indicated below.
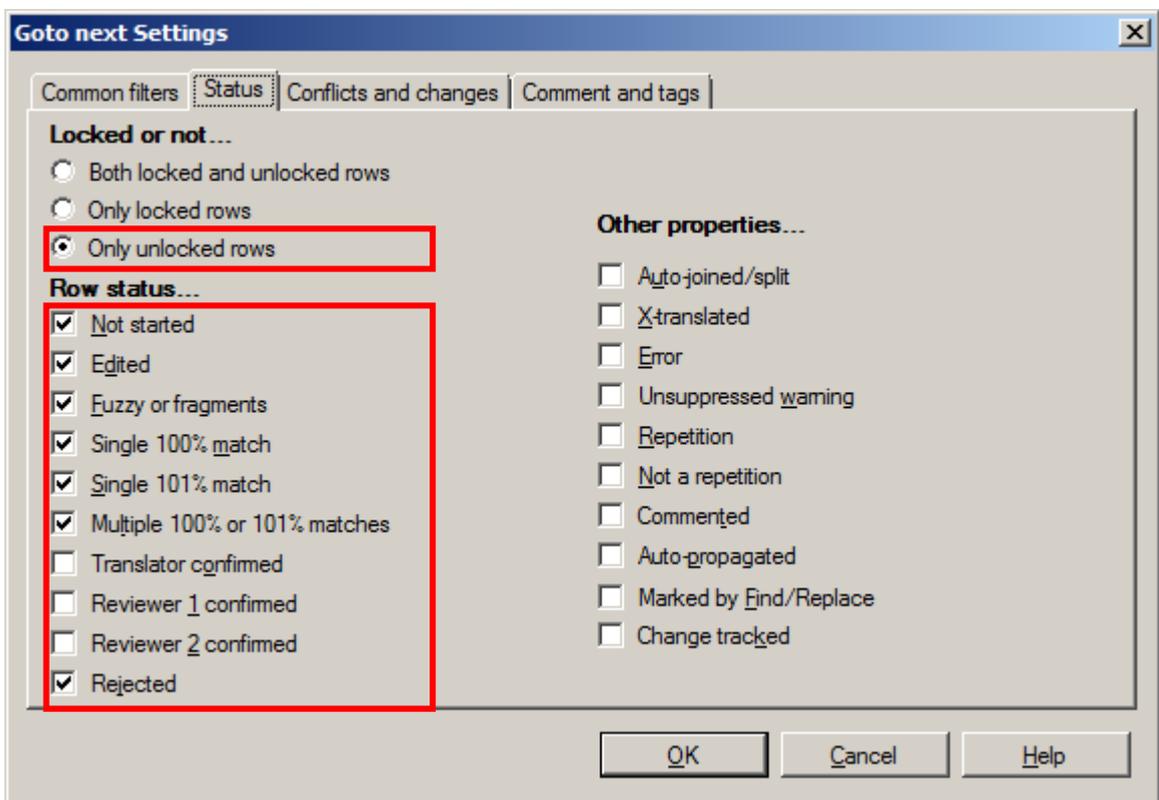
- Press OK to save Goto Next settings.
- Press OK to save Automatic Lookup and Insertion settings.

Note that you can change Goto Next settings without first opening Automatic Lookup and Insertion settings dialogue as follows:

- in memoQ 2014 R2 and newer versions: select Edit tab, press the down arrow next to Goto Next button and select Settings...

- in memoQ 2014 and older versions: click Edit -> Goto Next Settings…

Step 2b. Configure auto-propagation

In this step, we will adjust memoQ's auto-propagation settings in order to apply translations to repetitions in Step 8.

To change Auto-propagation settings:

- memoQ 2014 R2 and newer versions: open *Translations* tab, click *Translation Settings* button, select *Auto-Propagation*.

- memoQ 2014 and older versions: open any document or view and click *Translation -> Auto-Propagation*.

In *Auto-Propagation Settings* dialogue, enable *Allow Auto-Propagation* checkbox and select *Propagate Backward and Forward* option as shown on the screenshot below. Also check *Overwrite Confirmed Segments* and select *Translator or Either Reviewer Confirmed* option so that changes are propagated to all repetitions and these repetitions are marked with the Confirmed status.
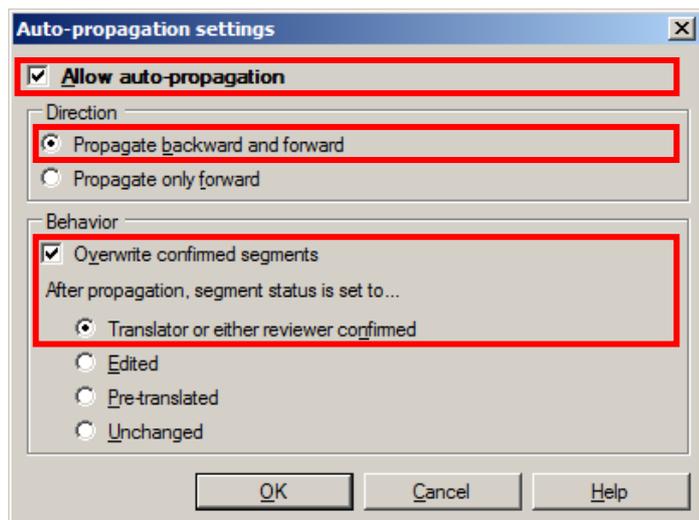
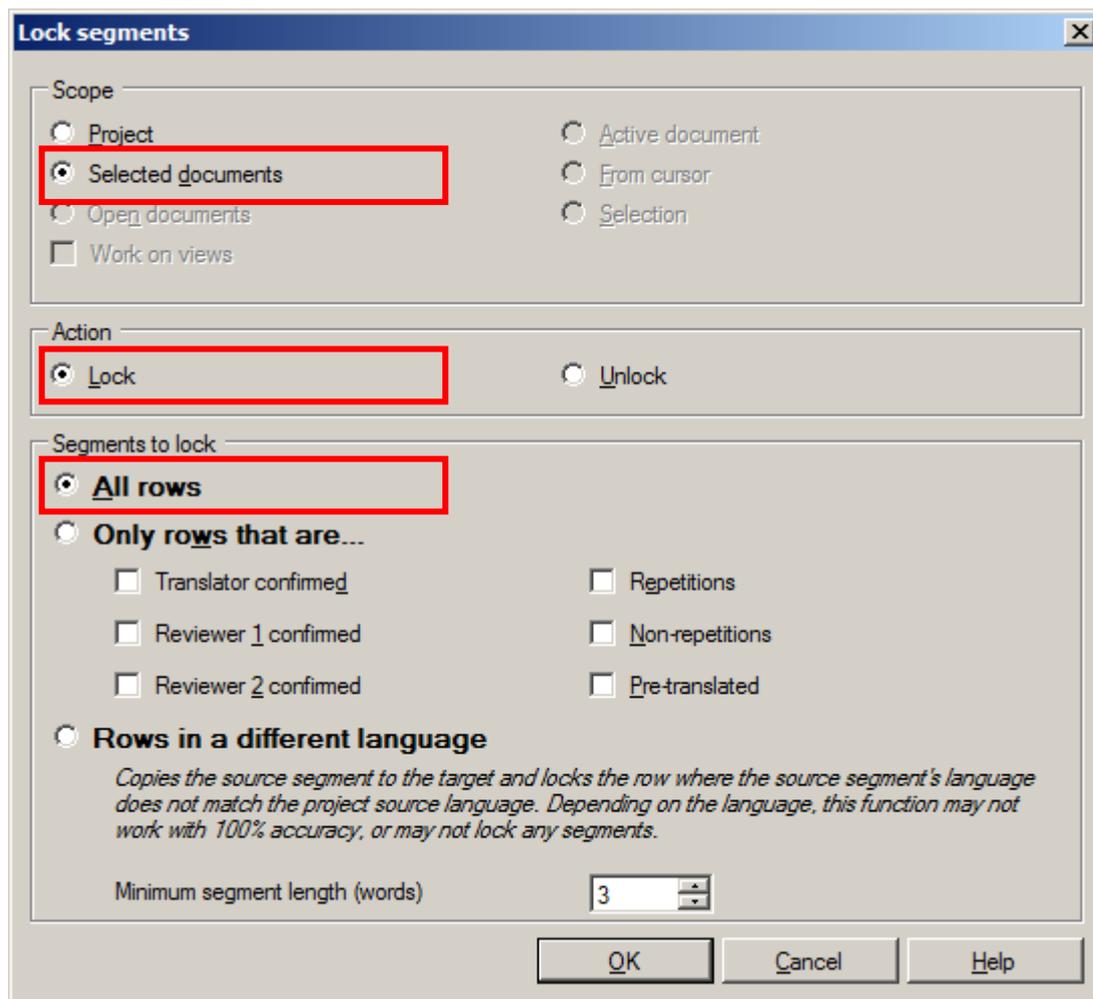### Step 3.   Lock repetitions

Before you can start translation, you need to lock repetitions in order to translate all First Segment Occurrences only (i.e., the first occurrences of each segment, which include segments occurring only once and the first occurrences of every repetitive segment). This is done in 2 steps:

Step 3a. Lock all segments in project / selected documents.

To lock all segments, select the appropriate documents in the Translations pane and

- in memoQ 2014 R2 and newer versions: click Lock/Unlock Segments under Preparation tab.

- in memoQ 2014 and older versions: click Operations -> Lock/Unlock Segments....

In Lock Segments dialogue, select *Selected documents*, *Lock* and *All Rows* options as shown below:
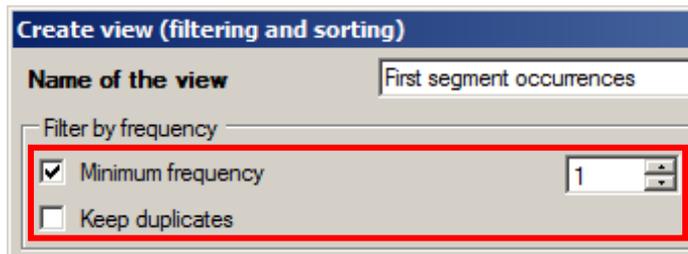
Step 3b. Unlock First Segment Occurrences

In this step, you are going to unlock all first segment occurrences. This way you will be able to translate first segment occurrences while keeping repetitions locked.

To unlock all first segment occurrences, do the following:

- Create a view of first segment occurrences:
    - open Translations pane and select the same documents that were selected in Step 3a,
    - open *Create View* dialogue:
        - in memoQ 2014 R2 and newer versions: use Documents tab -> Create View command.
        - in memoQ 2014 and older versions: press Create View link under the Documents list.
    - click *Advanced options* link located in the bottom-left corner of the Create View dialogue,
    - type the name of the view (use a self-explanatory name like "First segment occurrences" or add "_first_segments" suffix to your name),
    - check *Minimum Frequency* checkbox and choose "1",
    - uncheck *Keep Duplicates* checkbox,

      o   press *OK* to create the view.

- Open the first segment occurrences view you have just created.

- Open Lock Segments dialogue:
    - <u>in memoQ 2014 R2 and newer versions:</u> click Lock/Unlock Segments under Preparation tab.
    - <u>in memoQ 2014 and older versions:</u> click Operations -> Lock/Unlock Segments....

- In Lock Segments dialogue, select *Active Document*, *Unlock* and *All Rows* options. This will unlock all the rows within the First Segment Occurrences view so that only unique segments in your documents are unlocked.

- **Remove the First Segment Occurrences view.** This is important because, unless this view is removed, memoQ will not allow joining or splitting segments in documents.

At the end of <u>Step 3</u>, all repetitions (i.e., repetitive segments except the first occurrence) will be locked so that they cannot be translated. However, later on you will be able to unlock them in special cases as explained below.

Step 4.   Translate individual documents

Open each document and translate it normally, confirming each translated segment. If you have configured Goto Next settings correctly, memoQ will jump to the next unlocked unconfirmed segment each time you confirm a segment using Confirm command (Ctrl+Enter).

If the project contains small documents or if you are the only translator on the project, it is easier to translate a single view of all documents (All Segments view) rather than individual documents. See <u>Step 5</u> for instructions on creating All Segments view.

<u>Note on joining and splitting of segments:</u> As you translate, you may need to join or split some segments. You will be able to split segments without problems. However, if you need to join a segment with the next segment and the next segment is locked, memoQ will not allow this. In order to join the segments, unlock the next segment with Ctrl+Shift+L (Lock/Unlock command) and then join the segments.
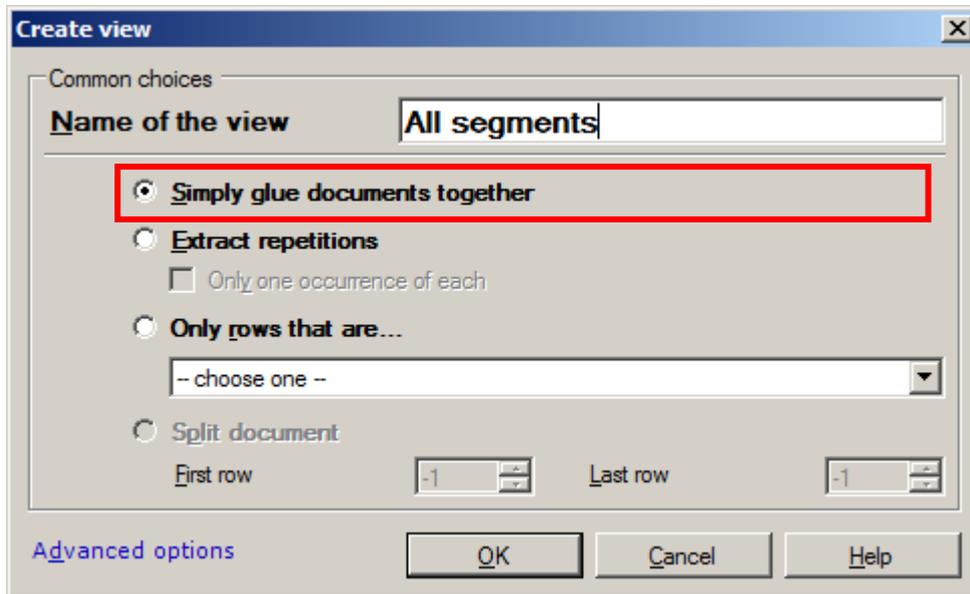
Step 5.   Create All Segments view

All Segments view is a view that contains every segment from every document in the same order as in the original documents. In a way, a view acts as a window into the documents it contains: when you work on segments in a view, you change the respective documents that contain these segments. In memoQ 2014 and newer versions you can also join / split segments and use the preview if you work in such a view.

To create All Segments view, select the appropriate documents in the Translations pane and

- <u>in memoQ 2014 R2 and newer versions:</u> use Documents tab -> Create View command.

- in memoQ 2014 and older versions: press Create View link.

In *Create View* dialogue, type the name of the view and choose *Simply Glue Documents Together* option, give this view a name (e.g., "All segments"), then press OK.

Step 6.   Review the translation using All Segments view

Open the newly created view of all segments and perform proofreading, spellchecking, QA or replacements. Confirm each segment as you proceed using Confirm command (via Ctrl+Enter shortcut), or confirm all changed segments at once at the end of this step.

When you use Run QA command, make sure that *Include locked segments* option is unchecked in the *Run QA* dialogue to avoid reviewing locked segments.

Note: You need to finalize the review of all first segment occurrences in this step. If you decide to amend any translations after Step 7, see Attachment 1 – Last-minute translation changes.

Step 7.   Unlock all locked segments

When review is finished, we are ready to unlock all previously locked repetitions so that we can fill them with final translations.

To unlock all locked segments, open All Segments view and

1. Open Lock Segments dialogue:
   - in memoQ 2014 R2 and newer versions: click Lock/Unlock Segments under Preparation tab.
   - in memoQ 2014 and older versions: click Operations -> Lock/Unlock Segments....
2. In Lock Segments dialogue, select *Active Document*, *Unlock* and *All Rows* options.

Step 8.   Confirm all segments with Confirmed status to propagate their translations to repetitions (using Confirm command).

In this step you will propagate the translation of already confirmed segments to all repetitions.

To perform this, do the following:

- Make sure that Auto-propagation is activated as explained in Step 2b.

- Open All Segments view (or, if you choose to deliver one document at a time, stay within the current document).

- Sort segments by Row Status column.

  Sort Row status   ▼
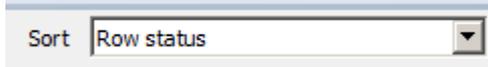
- Select all rows with Confirmed status (✔). To do this, you can select the first row with Confirmed status by left-clicking its row number on the left, scroll to the last row having Confirmed status, and, while holding down the Shift key, left-click its row number.

- Confirm the selected rows by **using Confirm command** (Ctrl+Enter shortcut).

> ⓘ Note: *Confirm* command (✔) available via Ctrl+Enter shortcut or via *Quick Access & Translation* ribbon tabs) <u>must not be confused with *Confirm And Update Rows* command</u> (available under *Preparation* tab). Unlike Confirm command, Confirm And Update Rows command does not propagate the translation of the selected segment(s) to other segments in the current document.

> ⓘ **<u>Note concerning unlocked repetitive segments that remain empty after propagation:</u>**
> If you have chosen to work on one document at a time and in a special order, perhaps due to the client requesting partial deliveries, it is possible that when you unlock repetitive segments and use the above method, some repetitive segments may remain untranslated after propagation. This is because memoQ determines **<u>first</u>** occurrences of repetitive segments (in Step 3) by processing documents in a special order which may be different from the order in which documents are listed in the Documents list or from the order in which you choose to translate / deliver these documents.
>
> Let's imagine that you have 2 documents, "document 1" and "document 2". You choose to translate and deliver them in the following sequence: "document 1", "document 2". When you finish translating "document 1", you unlock all locked segments (Step 7) and propagate confirmed segments throughout this document (Step 8) in order to deliver this document to the client before proceeding to "document 2". However, some segments will remain empty because, when memoQ determined first occurrences of repetitive segments, "document 2" was processed before "document 1" and some segments which occur in both documents were therefore locked in "document 1", not "document 2". This cannot happen if you are working in All Segments view of course.
>
> <u>The workaround is to do the following:</u>
>
> After Step 8 is finished, if you think such empty repetitive segments have already been translated in another document, use "Pre-Translate" to translate them (Pre-Translate is accessible from the Preparation tab). The following settings are best:
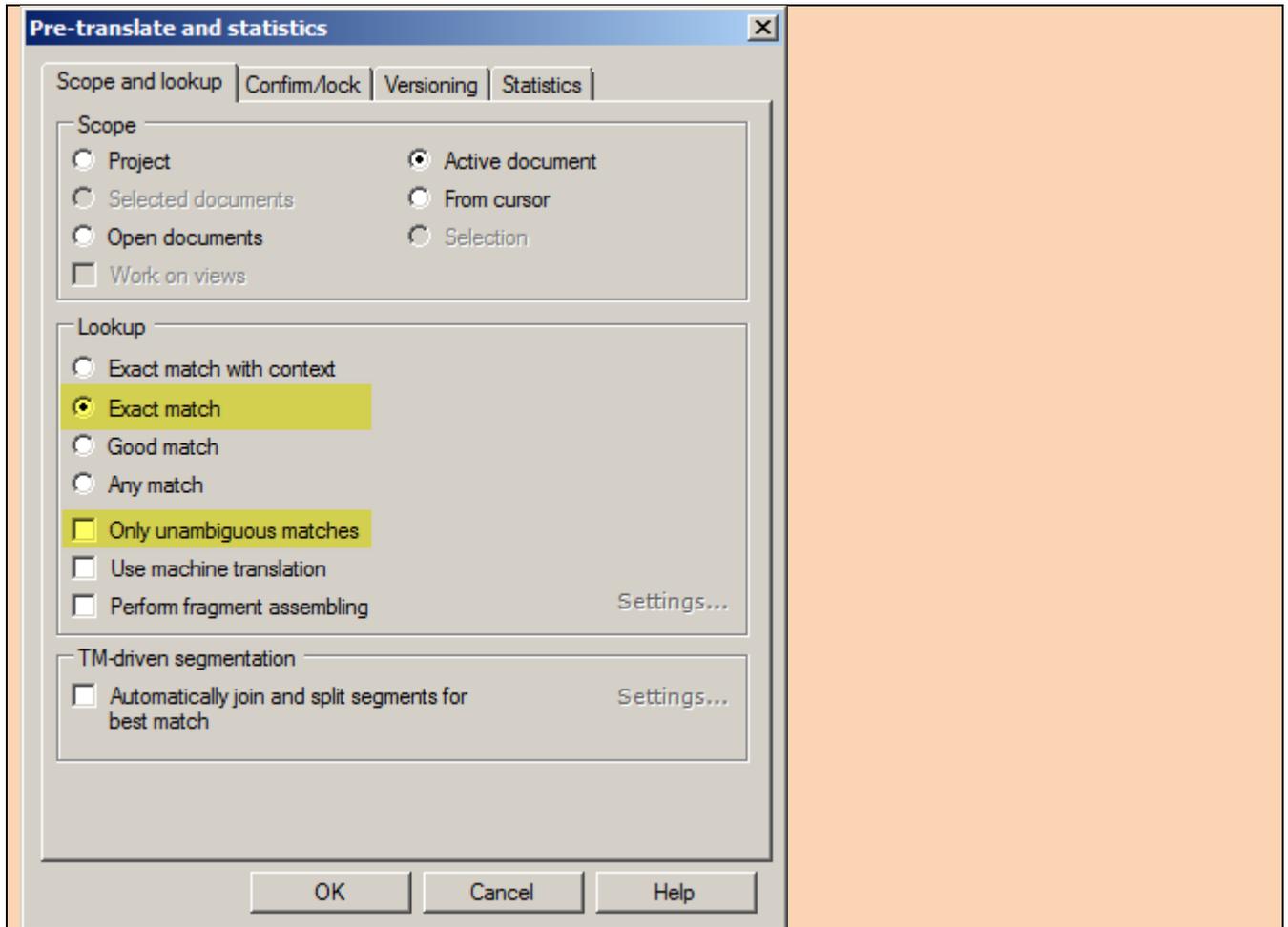
If such empty repetitive segments have not yet been translated in another document (and so they are not available in the TM for pre-translate), you will have to translate them now and then use "Pre-Translate" when you work on other documents within the same set of repetitive documents.

As all this can be confusing at times, you can use the following setting in the Pre-Translate dialogue in order to identify these segments once pre-translated so that you can check them.

Please remember that such problems cannot occur if you are working in All Segments view.
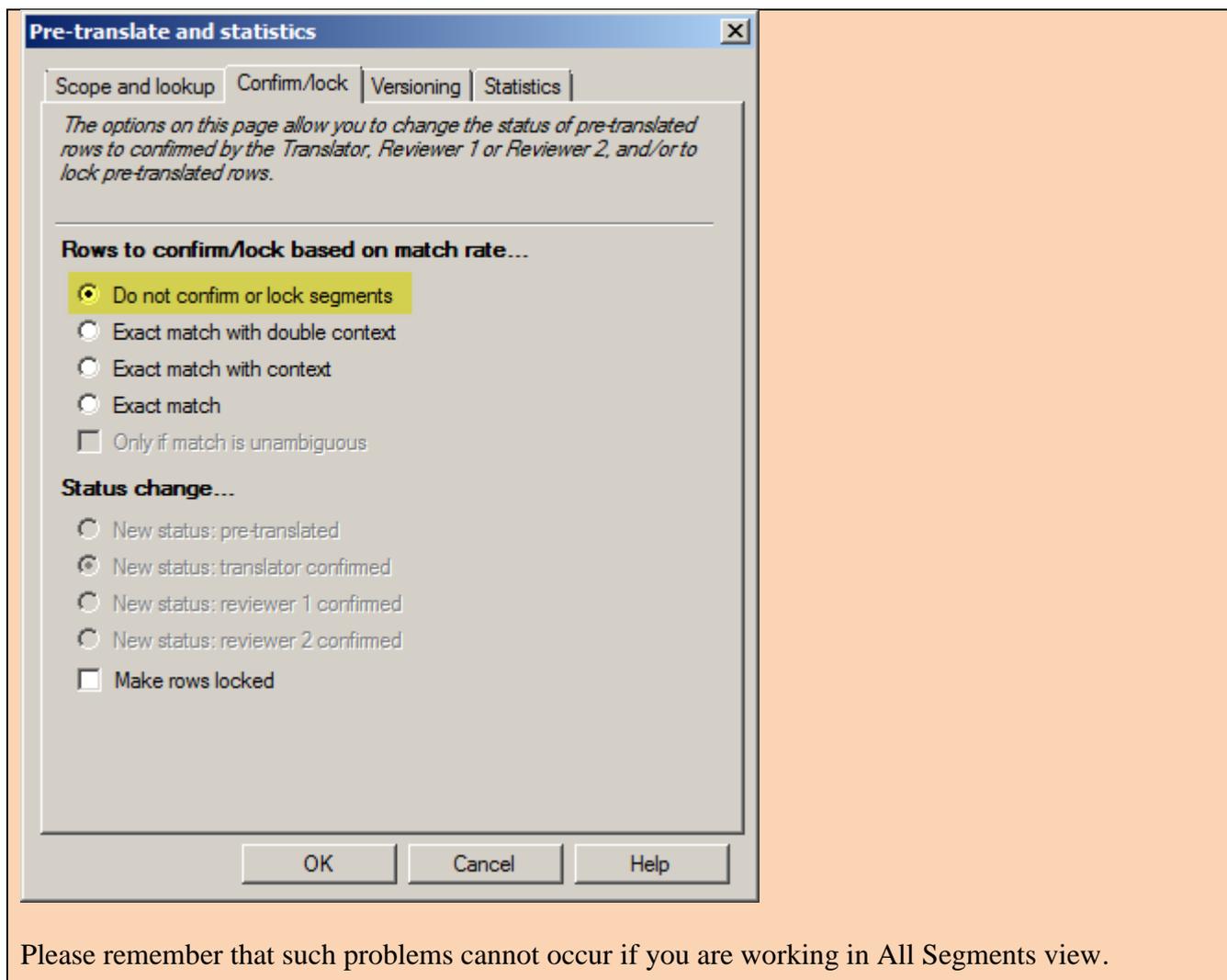
Note: If you need to amend any segments later on, see Attachment 1 – Last-minute translation changes.

Step 9.   Check any repetitions that are translated differently depending on context.

If All Segments view contains any identical segments that should be translated differently depending on context, you must now disable auto-propagation (uncheck *Allow Auto-propagation* option, see Step 2b) and correct such repetitive segments. Confirm these segments.

The best way to check whether different repetitions should be translated differently is to perform the following:

1. Sort on source language alphabetically so repeated segments are together in groups.

2. Change the Goto Next Settings to jump to repeated segments (by checking Repetition box and unchecking all others under Status tab), so that you can navigate between repeated segments in alphabetical order.

Step 10.   Confirm segments from all translated documents to the TM using Confirm and Update Rows command.

In this step we will confirm all segments to the TM so that the TM contains the final translations of each segment, including repetitions.

To update your TM, select all the relevant documents and:

- memoQ 2014 R2 and newer versions: switch to *Preparation* tab and click *Confirm And Update*.

- memoQ 2014 and older versions: choose *Operations -> Confirm and Update Rows...*

In *Confirm and Update Rows* dialogue, select *Selected Documents* and *All Statuses* options and press OK as shown on the following screenshot:
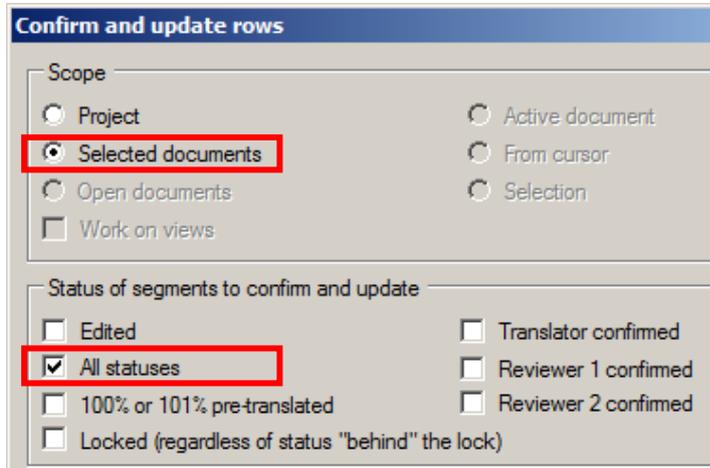
You can also do the same by opening All Segments view and running *Confirm and Update Rows* command with *Active Document* and *All Statuses* options.

> ⓘ Note: for the distinction between *Confirm* command and *Confirm and Update Rows* command, see the note in Step 8.

Step 11.   Congratulations, you are done!

Important notes:

1. To avoid problems using this workflow, your active working TM (the TM where segments are recorded as you confirm them) must **not** be created with "Allow multiple translations" option.

Attachment 1 – Last-minute translation changes

When you work on a project with a lot of repetitions and make any changes to repetitive segments, you need to be very careful to avoid inconsistent translations in your project and prevent old translations from remaining in the TM. If you follow this workflow step by step, your project will be translated consistently and your TM will contain only the final translations of all segments. However, in some cases you will need to make changes to some segments after Step 7, i.e., after unlocking and translating repetitions. In this case you need to follow the procedure outlined below:

1. Whenever you must change a segment, do this from All Segments view. Use Confirm command (Ctrl+Enter) to confirm the changed segment (see the note on distinction between Confirm and Confurm & Update Rows command in Step 8). Auto-propagation settings must be configured as explained in Step 2b so that your correction is propagated automatically to all repetitions of the confirmed segment.
   If you want to make sure that all repetitions are translated appropriately depending on context, you can change Auto-propagation settings as follows: check *Propagate Only Forward* and *Edited* options in Auto-propagation Settings dialogue. When these options are used, upon segment confirmation memoQ will propagate your changes to the following identical segments, but it will mark them with Edited status (✗) so that you can correct them if needed.

2. If you must use *Resolve Errors and Warnings* tab (QA command) or *Find / Replace* tab (Replace command), DO NOT confirm the changed segment because auto-propagation does not work in these tabs and so your new translation will not be applied to repetitions. After you correct all segments without confirming them, open All Segments view, sort segments by Row Status column, and then confirm all segments with Edited status (✗) in order to propagate their translations to repetitions.

At the end, perform Steps 9 and 10 to check context-dependent repetitions and write all final translations to the TM.

Is this all <u>really</u> necessary?

It might seem that we are trying to crack a nut with a sledgehammer, but on a large project with high repetitions, if your aim is to provide a consistent translation, the answer is **"yes, this is really necessary"**.

You will simply not be able to achieve a consistent translation and TM otherwise.

Our observations were largely based on a project of 193k words with around 80% repetitions done the "old" way (without preliminary locking of repetitions). All the above problems were observed and discussed as we endeavoured to work out why the translation and TM were inconsistent and "behaving badly".

A demo of the reverting TM (while using QA) was also performed for Kilgray on Skype. The technician was sceptical at first but had to acknowledge that the TM had reverted to an incorrect entry after the demo, and that both entries were showing confirmed status and 100% match, but that only one was correct (the first one) while the TM said the second one was correct (because the TM had reverted back).

Several smaller projects with a high percentage of repetitions were then handled using the new workflow. None of the previous problems were observed.

memoQ is a powerful tool but the downside is that for more complex jobs the software becomes more complicated to configure and understand as you can well see in this document.

Probably the programmers at Kilgray themselves do not see all the repercussions of new features as they are added on to previous ones. Of course, neither do translators, and one little "incorrect" setting or step is enough to sink the whole ship.

All this explains why translators often say that they changed a segment and had propagation activated but they still find the uncorrected version in their documents and/or TM or duplicate source segments with multiple translations.

Disclaimer

We highly recommend you to test and get more comfortable with this workflow on a non-urgent live project.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to all those on the Yahoo memoQ forum for pointers, suggestions and sharing their observations, which helped greatly. Please do provide comments on the workflow.

Thanks also to Kilgray who never deny our difficulties but try to understand and address them and who bring out new versions with improvements based on our comments.

Stanislav Okhvat (stasokhvat@gmail.com)

SafeTex (safetex@ymail.com)

December 2015