TransSearch Tutorial and Exercise: Level I

TransSearch is an online bilingual concordancer which allows a user to search large databases of ready-made bitexts. TransSearch contains a number of databases of English-French bitexts, including the Canadian Hansard (parliamentary debates) and Canadian court rulings. (There are also bitexts of English, French and Spanish international labour conventions and related documents.) You can find out more about TransSearch by consulting the online help files (www.tsrali.com > **ENGLISH** > **HELP**).

TransSearch allows a user to consult bitexts created with an automatic aligner developed in the laboratory for Applied Research in Computational Linguistics (*Recherche appliquée en linguistique informatique*, or *RALI*) at the University of Montreal; in fact, this is the same technology that is used to align files in LogiTerm.

Doing these exercises will help you learn to:

- Log in to TSRALI, and

- Search the bitexts and evaluate the results.

Getting ready

1. Connect to the Internet (if necessary) and open the browser of your choice (for example, Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox, both accessible from the shortcut on your Desktop or from the **START** menu).

2. Type www.tsrali.com into the browser's address bar (or simply click on the link), and explore the TransSearch help files.

   a. Click on the **ENGLISH** link at the top right of the page to change the interface language.

   b. Click on the **HELP** link and read through the help files to familiarize yourself with TransSearch and how it works, including the search options.

3. Click the **QUERIES** link to return to the home page.

4. Log in to TransSearch by entering your username and password in the fields that appear near the bottom left of the page.

   a. Your username is your first initial and your last name (e.g., Jsmith).

   b. Your password will be given to you in class by your professor or teaching assistant.

NOTE: This account will be active until the end of the semester, which means that you can use it at any time until then. Since TransSearch is entirely on-line, you can access it anywhere you have an Internet connection.

If you are not currently registered in a course that uses TransSearch, you will not have an active account. However, you can still register for a free five-day trial of TransSearch. For instructions, consult the document *Registering for a free trial of TransSearch* on the CERTT site (ACCESS BY TOOL NAME > TRANSSEARCH).

Searching

1. Choose the base of bitexts you wish to search.

    a. From the drop-down list, choose the *House of Commons Hansard (1986-2008)*.

2. Do a simple query for *traitement*.

    a. Enter *traitement* in the *Expression* field.

    b. Click the **SEARCH** button.

3. Look at the search results.

    a. Browse through the contexts containing the search string as well as its translations, to see how the search string was translated.

    b. To see more contexts, click the **MORE MATCHES** button.

    c. To see the larger context from which this context was taken, click the numbered button next to the segment. How is the bitext displayed?

    d. Return to the list of occurrences by clicking the **BACK TO RESULTS** button.

4. Do a search for a more complex expression, *à la mitaine*.

    a. Enter *à la mitaine* in the Expression field and click the **SEARCH** button.

    b. Evaluate the results. What equivalents are suggested?

5. Do a search for *eventually*.

    a. How is this search string translated in French?

    b. What are the difficulties of searching for translations of such words in a resource such as this one?

6. Do a search for *information*.

    a. How is the search string indicated in English? In French?

    b. What does this tell you about how the tool works?

7. Do a search for *decision.*

    a. Where is this search string identified? What does this tell you about how the tool works?

    b. What are the possible equivalents?

    c. What types of words are commonly used with *decision* (for example, verbs, adjectives, other nouns), i.e. what are its collocates?

    d. What are the possible equivalents of those words?

    e. What are the advantages of this type of an approach to searching compared to searching in more traditional resources?

8. Choose another base of bitexts and repeat the search.

    a. From the drop-down list, choose the *Canadian Court rulings (1986-2007)*.

    b. Re-do the search for *decision*.

    c. Are the equivalents the same? What about the collocates?

9. Return to the Hansard base and do a dictionary query for the verb *concevoir*.

   a. Enter *concevoir+* in the *Expression* field and click the **SEARCH** button.

   b. Evaluate the results.

   c. What does the dictionary query allow you to do? In what type of situation might this be useful?

10. Do a search for *information* in only one language.

    a. Click the **BILINGUAL QUERY** button.

    b. Enter *information* in the *English Expression* field.

    c. How do these results differ from the standard search for this search string?

11. Do a search for *design* in English.

    a. Enter *design* in the *English Expression* field.

    b. Evaluate the results to identify possible translations.

12. Do a bilingual query for *design* in English and *conception* in French.

    a. Enter *design* in the *English Expression* field.

    b. Enter *conception* in the *French Expression* field.

    c. Browse through the results. What do you notice?

13. Do a search for a semi-fixed expression that includes *fox* and *henhouse*.

    a. Click the **SIMPLE QUERY** button.

    b. Enter *fox..henhouse* in the *Expression* field.

    c. What does the two-point ellipsis (..) allow you to do?

    d. What different forms do you notice for this search string?

    e. What are the possible translations for this search string?

14. In the Canadian Courts base, do a search for the words *juge* and *procès* appearing at a distance from each other.

    a. Enter *juge+ ...procès+* in the Expression field.

    b. What does the three-point ellipsis (…) allow you to do?

    c. How can this type of search be useful?

15. Reverse the words in the search string (*procès+ ...juge+*) and re-do the search.

    a. What effect does the order of words in the search string have on the search results?

Wrapping up

1. Log out of the session by clicking on the **QUIT** link at the top right-hand corner of the screen.

2. Close the browser.

Questions for reflection

1. Do you think TransSearch is a useful translation tool? In what type of situation?

2. What are the differences between TransSearch and other bilingual concordancing tools you have used? What are the limitations of this tool? What are its advantages?

3. Compare the options available in TransSearch to those available in other concordancing tools such as LogiTerm. Analyze the similarities and the differences (for example, search options available in one tool but not another, or different ways to carry out the same or similar tasks).

4. Did you have any difficulties in finding the equivalent of a search string in TransSearch? Why do you think the equivalent of the search string is not indicated by TransSearch?

5. What possibilities are suggested by searches in this type of resource that would not necessarily be proposed in more traditional resources?

6. What approaches are used in other tools to find more than one form of the same word? What are the benefits and drawbacks of the different approaches?

7. What does the bilingual search tell you about how TransSearch searches work? How might this type of search be useful?