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## Freelancer spotlight

Gain inspiration  
from other  
translator's stories

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Jadwiga  
Ruchlewska

Language pairs:  
EN-PL

SDL\*

### What makes a good translator?

A good translator is of course someone who loves languages and likes playing with words, but what I find even more important is that it is someone who likes to listen. Or even someone who prefers to listen than to talk. After all, a translator is not someone who is giving others his or her own words and ideas, but rather an [invisible] someone who gives others words and ideas of someone else. So, we need to listen very carefully without forming our own opinions or trying to say what we think they wanted to say.

### Do you have any suggestions of first steps for people new to freelance translating?

I think the most important thing is to look around. We need to think big, but we also need to be able to see small: perhaps there is a local business that would benefit from the help of a professional translator because they are trading with customers in your target language? I also think it is very important to specialise and find your niche – especially if there is a lot of competition in your language pair. So if you have another degree that is not in languages, family running a business in some specific industry or perhaps an interesting hobby – capitalise on that! Everyone can do general, so make sure you can do special! It won't be just a differentiator; it will also make your work easier (and faster as a consequence) and help you produce translations of higher quality.

"Everyone can do general, so make  
sure you can do special!"

Try the world's  
leading  
translation  
software - **SDL  
Trados Studio** -  
for free!

### **Where would you advise freelancers, who are new to the industry, to look for help?**

A lot of my clients (and indeed the best ones) came via recommendation, so I think it is very important to network and keep in touch with colleagues – not just because of the social aspect and the mutual support, but because they can recommend you to a client looking for someone in your language pair or specialisation. And people trust recommendations. You can send hundreds of cold e-mails to potential clients or applications to translation agencies, going through all the steps of filling forms and taking test translations and never get any jobs, but a single colleague can put you in touch with a client or agency in need and this could be a start of a long term relationship.

An excellent opportunity for networking and meeting colleagues are industry events like workshops and conferences organised by professional associations. Very often you don't need to be a member to take part, but joining a professional association has a lot of benefits and it also enhances your credibility as a professional. I invested in becoming a Qualified Member of the Institute of Translation & interpreting (ITI) and I haven't regretted it for a second! One of the advantages that I particularly value apart from the recognition is that members are strongly recommended to take continuous professional development activities, which gives me extra motivation to always develop my skills and deepen my knowledge.

### **Are there any specific SDL Trados Studio features or functionality you most like using or find of benefit?**

I found the new features in Studio 2017 a great improvement. The project preparation process was made much easier and quicker, which was great. But what I also found very useful was the upLIFT functionality. I love the fragment recall feature, because it enables me to automatically retrieve terms, phrases and even bigger parts of sentences and quickly and easily (with a single click) insert them into the new text I am translating. It's a great way of enhancing the concordance search as it happens automatically and just gives me the bits I need (I don't have to read the whole sentence and fish for the term or phrase I need or want and then copy-paste it into the new sentence).

I also like the fuzzy match repair functionality – I was not hoping for much with this one when I first started using Studio 2017, simply because I did not believe it would be able to produce any helpful machine repairs in my language pair (EN-PL), but was actually surprised to see that it does come in very handy, especially in certain types of texts.

Read our beginner's  
guide to the new  
upLIFT technology  
in Studio 2017