

MESSAGE EDITOR 5.000

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All text in Sierra games is stored in message files. These files can be created and edited using the Message Editor program, ME. This document describes the use of the Message Editor. ME also contains a full context-sensitive, hypertext-like help system, accessible by pressing F1 at any time.

At the end of this document there is a changes history, which presents a log of changes made to the program by version number and date. To find out what's new with the Message Editor, look at the most current version of this document, which is stored on X: as ME.DOC.

Message Concepts

Each message in a Sierra game is identified by noun, verb, case and sequence number. In general, the noun and verb is used to tie the message to a player action like clicking the eye cursor on the rock, which would result in displaying the ROCK LOOK message. This message is displayed without the application programmer having to specially code it. When the player clicks on the rock, the system sees if a ROCK LOOK message has been defined and displays it.

A case is used when you want to specify different messages for the same player action, depending on the current state of the game. For example, you may want to display different messages depending on whether the player chose the "blind from birth" option. Then you'd have two cases: BLIND and SIGHTED. There would be one ROCK LOOK BLIND message and one ROCK LOOK SIGHTED message.

Often there will be several messages displayed for a given noun-verb-case, possibly spoken by different talkers in a conversation. In that event, you'll assign the same noun, verb and case to each of these messages, but give them different sequence numbers. For instance, if looking at the rock while blind led to a conversation between Graham and Cedric, there would be messages defined for ROCK LOOK BLIND 1, where the talker would be GRAHAM, and for ROCK LOOK BLIND 2, where the talker would be CEDRIC. Each message in a file must have a unique noun-verb-case-sequence number.

Nouns, verbs and cases can be also be used as completely arbitrary identifiers that simply differentiate one message or group of messages from another. For example, you can write a message to be displayed when the player first enters a room and identify it by the noun "ENTER_ROOM". The verb and case are optional in this case and default to "ALL", a special value for verbs and cases that matches any verb or case.

In order to avoid duplication of messages, it is possible to define one message in terms of other messages. You can, for example, designate that 'EXAMINE ROCK' should display the same message as 'LOOK ROCK'. See the Reference Fields section below for details.

USING THE MESSAGE EDITOR

Starting ME

Start ME by typing **ME [-h] [-t[file-ext]] [-wwhere-file-name][<filename>]** at the DOS command line (brackets enclose optional items). <filename> is replaced with the name of the message file you want to work on (the .MSG extension may be omitted). The **-h** option puts the screen in 50-line mode, otherwise the current screen mode is used. The **-t** option is for translating mode. file-ext is the extension to use for the translation file. The **-w** option lets you specify the name of your 'where' file if it isn't in the current directory.

To exit the program, type Alt+X.

The ME Screen

At the top of the screen is the menu bar. To execute menu commands with the mouse, click on a menu item to open the menu box, then drag the selection bar down to the desired item and release the mouse button. To use the keyboard, press Alt plus the highlighted letter of the desired menu item to open the menu box, then either use the arrow keys to move the selection bar to the desired item and press Enter, or type the highlighted letter of the desired menu item. Note that many menu items have associated accelerator keys, listed beside each item in the menu box. For instance, to open a file you can simply press F3.

At the bottom of the screen is the status line. This contains frequently used commands. To execute a status bar command with the mouse, just click on it. To execute a command with the keyboard, type the highlighted key beside the command.

At one time or another some commands in menus and on the status line are disabled and displayed in a dim color (on a color monitor). This indicates that the commands are not applicable at the current time.

Between the menu bar and the status line is the message list, which you can scroll up and down with the mouse and the arrow keys. Each line of the message list shows the noun, verb, case, sequence number, talker and message text. Most of the time the text is truncated to fit on the screen.

Adding or Changing a Message

To add a message, use the Edit|Add menu choice, or press Ins. The noun, verb, case and sequence number fields will default to adding the new message to the end of the current sequence. To insert a message in the middle of a sequence, use the Edit|Insert in sequence command, or press Ctrl+I. The new message will be inserted before the current message. To change a message, position the selection bar on the message you want to change using the arrow keys or the mouse, then use the Edit|Change menu choice or just press Enter.

The message dialog box will open, displaying the following fields:

Noun This field must be filled in for all messages. It can be up to 15 characters long. You can have up to 255 different nouns per file.

Verb	This field may be left blank, which is equivalent to making it "All". It can also be up to 15 characters. You can have up to 255 different verbs per game.
Case	You can leave this field blank too. When you go to another field, the case comment beneath it will be filled in. It can be up to 15 characters long. You can have up to 255 different cases per file.
Case comment	This field lets you describe the case in more detail. If you've already defined a comment for this case, it will be filled in automatically. If you change the comment, the change will be reflected in other messages that use this case. You can't enter carriage returns in this field. It can be up to 1000 characters long.
Sequence number	If you need a sequence of messages for a given noun-verb-case combination, number each of them with a different sequence number. There can be only one message in a file with a given noun-verb-case-sequence number. The maximum number is 35.
Talker	You must always fill in this field. The maximum length is 10. You can have up to 255 talkers per game.
Message text	This field holds the actual message that will appear in the game. It can be up to 2000 characters long. You can indicate stage directions inside the message text by using all caps inside parentheses (LIKE THIS). Stage directions will not be printed to the screen when the game is played, but will print in the script for audio actors.
Comment	Enter notes to programmers or to yourself here. The maximum length is 2000 characters.
Reference noun	Noun of the referenced message. See the Reference Fields section below for details.
Reference verb	Verb of the referenced message.
Reference case	Case of the referenced message.

Deleting a Message

To delete a message, use the Edit|Cut command (or press Shift+Del) or the Edit|Clear command (or press Del). Edit|Cut saves the message in the scrap; Edit|Clear does not, and therefore asks you to confirm the deletion.

If deleting the message creates a gap in a sequence, you will be asked if you want to renumber the sequence to close up the gap.

Copying and Pasting Messages

You can copy messages into the scrap then paste them back into the file. Cutting a message also puts it in the scrap. Pasting a message inserts it into the current sequence. You can also paste add, which adds the message in the scrap to the end of the current sequence.

Key Fields

The noun, verb, case and talker fields are key fields; they reference information in other files. Each of these fields has an arrow icon to its right. This means that you can press Down Arrow to see a list of all the keys for that field. You can use the cursor keys to scroll through the list or you can type the first letter or letters to find a specific key. When you've found the key you want, press Enter to insert it in the input field. Pressing Esc puts the list away and allows you to enter the key manually.

If the key you enter doesn't already exist, you will be asked if you want to add it. Keys are converted to uppercase. The first character must be a letter and the following characters must be letters, numbers, underscores ("_") or other characters acceptable to the SCI language. Spaces are not allowed in keys.

Keys must be distinct between nouns, verbs and cases. For instance, you can't use ROCK for both a noun and a verb (as you might want to if it were an inventory item). Use another name, like ROCK_I, for the verb.

See below under "User Interface" for complete details on using dialog boxes.

Reference Fields

Reference fields let you define a message to be the same as another message, without duplicating its text. This has advantages for the game's memory requirements and for recording CD-audio speech.

To point a message to another message, enter the referenced message's noun, verb and case in the appropriate reference fields. The message text will change to the referenced message's text, prefixed with an 'R'. The message text may also display "Not found" if the reference you entered was not found, or "Endless loop" if the reference points back to the original message. A referenced message may itself reference another message (to a maximum depth of 5 references).

Messages reference sequences, not individual messages. You can only reference the start of a sequence of messages (that's why you don't specify a reference sequence number: it's assumed to be 1). If there is a sequence of messages with the reference noun, verb and case, they are all considered to be included when the referring message is played back. For this reason, you can't refer to a message with the same noun, verb and case.

The "Go to ref" button at the bottom right corner of the dialog box takes you directly to the referenced message, so that you can change it.

To break a reference, simply delete the reference fields (use ^Y to delete each field). The referenced text will remain in the text field, without the prefixed 'R'.

You can't delete a referenced message, or change its noun, verb or case, since that would leave the referencing message pointing to a missing message.

Playing a Message

You can play a message's audio either from the message list or from the dialog box.

To play a message from the message list, choose the Audio Play command either by selecting from the Audio menu, pressing the Ctrl+P hotkey, or by clicking on the entry in the status line. To play it from the dialog box, click on the Play button, or press Alt+Y.

If the audio driver specified in the 'where' file can be correctly initialized, and if the audio file can be found (possibly using the search path specified in the 'where' file), the audio will play. You can press a key or click the mouse to cancel.

To play the current message file's audios continuously, select the Play Rest command from the Audio menu or press the Ctrl+A hotkey. The messages in the file will be played, beginning with the current message.

To display the audio file names in the message list, choose the Toggle Audio File Names menu choice from the Audio menu. The audio file name of the current message is always displayed in the dialog box.

Finishing with the Dialog Box

When you have finished adding or changing a message, press the OK button by clicking on it with the mouse, or use the Tab key to make the button current and press Enter, or press the OK button's accelerator key, Alt+K. You can cancel your changes by pressing Esc or by clicking on the Cancel button. If you are adding, the dialog box will reappear for you to add another message. When you're finished adding, just press Esc.

When editing you can accept your changes and move to the next or previous message by pressing the appropriate button.

Finishing with a File

After you have finished with a file, you can save it and edit another file, or exit the program. To save the file, press F2 or use the File menu item and choose Save. To edit another file, press F3 or use the File|Load menu command to choose from a list of files. To exit the program, press Alt+X or choose the File|Quit command. If you haven't saved your changes, you will be asked if you want to.

Take advantage of the help system if you have any questions or problems with the Message Editor.

USER INTERFACE

Menus

Menu commands can be accessed via the keyboard or the mouse. To use the keyboard, press Alt plus the highlighted letter of the desired menu entry. For example, to access the File menu, press Alt+F. Once the menu is open, you can press the highlighted letter of the selection you want. Alternately, you can use the arrow keys to highlight the selection and press Enter. This has the advantage of letting you see a brief description of what each item does in the status line. You can also press F1 to get help for the highlighted item, as you can at any other time in the program.

To use the mouse, simply click on the menu you want, drag it down to the desired item and release the mouse button.

The Status Line

The status line generally shows some of the more common commands that are available, together with the hotkeys that invoke them. You can execute the command either by pressing the hotkey or by clicking on the status line with the mouse.

At other times, the status line will display a brief help message indicating what you should do.

If a critical error occurs (like trying to print when you're not connected to a printer), an abort/retry prompt will appear in the status line.

The status line always shows the amount of free memory available to the program in the lower right corner.

Windows

There are several kinds of windows used in this program. Depending on the window, you can perform the following actions:

Most windows can be moved around the screen by dragging the title bar. This can be useful if a window is obscuring information beneath it.

Most windows also have a close box in the top left corner. Clicking on this closes the window and is usually equivalent to pressing Esc.

List box and help windows have scroll bars you can use to navigate.

Help windows have the ability to be resized. You can zoom the window to fill the screen by clicking on the maximize icon in the top right corner. Clicking it again, when the icon has changed to a double-headed arrow, restores the window to its former size. Help windows can also be resized by dragging the resize corner, at the lower right corner of the window.

Dialog Boxes

Much of the time you enter information, you will be using a dialog box. Dialog boxes are windows that can contain input fields, memo fields, checkboxes and radio buttons, and buttons (see below for descriptions of each of these items).

Most fields and other parts of the dialog have hotkeys--indicated by letters in a contrasting color. You can quickly move to or select a given field by pressing Alt plus the appropriate letter. You can also use the Tab and Shift+Tab keys to move to the next or previous dialog item. You can also move to a dialog item simply by clicking on it with the mouse.

If the dialog box is hiding part of the screen that you need to see, you can move it out of the way by dragging the title bar with the mouse.

After you have finished entering the information requested by the dialog box, you can press Enter to accept it or Esc to cancel. You can use the mouse to accept the dialog by clicking on the OK button. You can cancel by clicking on the Cancel button or on the close box at the top left of the window.

Input Fields

You use input fields to enter text. (For multi-line memo fields, such as the Message field see "Memo Fields" below). Use the arrow keys to move around inside an input field. Pressing Home takes you to the beginning of the field and pressing End takes you to the end. Del deletes the current character. Backspace deletes the previous character. Ctrl+Y deletes the entire field.

If the text is highlighted, the next letter you type will replace it. Press End to unhighlight it to add characters to the end. If the text is too long to fit, the field will scroll horizontally.

Combo Fields

Some input fields have an arrow icon to their right. This means that you can press Down Arrow (or click on the arrow with the mouse) to see a list of all the choices for that field. You can use the cursor keys to scroll through the list or you can type the first letter or letters to find a specific key. When you've found the key you want, press Enter to insert it in the input field. Pressing Esc puts the list away and allows you to enter the key manually. You can also enter a new value in the field and, after you've confirmed you want to add it, it will appear in the combo list the next time you bring it down.

Memo Fields

A memo field (like the case comment, text or comment field) is a very simple wordwrapping word processor with facilities for inserting and changing text. Type the text without entering carriage returns unless you want them to appear in the actual message. These "hard" carriage returns are indicated with a paragraph symbol. Hard carriage returns are not permitted in case comment fields due to the way these fields are stored.

You can use the mouse and the cursor keys to position the cursor. By dragging with the mouse or by pressing cursor keys while holding down the Shift key, you can select blocks of text to delete. Ctrl+Y deletes an entire line.

Buttons

Buttons are generally used to do things like accepting or canceling a dialog box. To invoke a button, use the Tab or Shift+Tab key to move to it and press Enter. You can also click on it with the mouse. Most buttons have highlighted letters which you can use to invoke them by pressing Alt plus the letter. One button that has no highlighted letter is the Cancel button, which you can invoke by pressing Esc.

In some dialog boxes there is a default button (usually the OK button), whose text is displayed in a different color. This button can be invoked by pressing Enter even if the cursor is in a different part of the dialog box. For example, pressing Enter when the cursor is in the noun field of the messages dialog box is the same thing as pressing the OK button. This technique doesn't work when you're in a memo field, where pressing Enter inserts a carriage return into the field.

Checkboxes and Radio Buttons

Checkboxes allow you to select one or more choices from a list of possibilities. A checkbox field is surrounded by square brackets. If it is selected, an X appears in it. Radio buttons allow only one selection from a list of possibilities, like the buttons on an old-fashioned car radio. Radio buttons are surrounded by parentheses. The selected choice has a round bullet inside.

You select a checkbox or a radio button with the mouse by clicking on the choice you want. To use the keyboard, press the highlighted letter corresponding to your choice.

List boxes

The message, nouns, verbs, and cases lists and the lists in file selectors are all list boxes.

To move around in a list box using the keyboard, use the cursor keys to move the highlight. The Home and End keys take you to the top or bottom of the currently displayed page. Ctrl+PgUp and Ctrl+PgDn take you to the beginning or end of the list.

You can also navigate by typing in one or more letters. For example, if you type 'a', the first item that begins with 'a' will be selected. If you then type 'b' the first item that begins with 'ab' will be selected. The cursor indicates the number of matched characters. You can use Backspace to delete matched characters.

To use the mouse, click on the scroll bar.

Scroll bars

Scroll bars--vertical and horizontal--can be used in several windows to navigate with the mouse.

Clicking on one of the arrow icons in the scroll bar moves the highlight by one item in that direction. Clicking on the scroll bar above or below the small "thumb" box is equivalent to pressing PgUp or PgDn. You can go to a specific place in the list by dragging the thumb box. The thumb shows your relative position in the list.

File Selectors

When you open a file or save it under a new name, you will use a file selector. A file selector is a combination of an input field and a list box. You can choose a file name either by typing it in the input field or by selecting it from the list.

To choose a file from the list box, use the arrow keys or mouse to highlight it, then press Enter. You can also start typing the file name when the cursor is in the list box and the nearest match will be highlighted.

You can change what files are displayed in the list by entering a file specification like **C:** or **..MSG** in the input line.

If you don't enter a file extension, it defaults to **.MSG**.

The input field has a history list which you can access by pressing Down Arrow when the cursor is in the input line, or by clicking on the arrow icon next to the input line with the mouse. The history list lets you select from the last few file names you entered.

MESSAGE FILES

Message files have the extension **.MSG**. Each message file has an associated header file with the extension **.SHM**. This file contains the names of the nouns and cases you've used in the corresponding **.MSG** file. The Message Editor also uses two other files: **VERBS.SH**, which contains the names of the verbs used in the game; and **TALKERS.SH**, which contains the names of the talkers. The **.SHM** file and **NOUNS.SH** and **VERBS.SH** are used by the SCI programmers to connect **.MSG** files and their program source code. It is not necessary to keep **NOUNS.SH** and **VERBS.SH** in the current directory; by setting the **SINCLUDE** environment variable to point to the appropriate directory, the Message Editor will find them there. The **.SHM** files that go with **.MSG** files are always created and searched for in the directory that contains the associated **.MSG** file.

File Locking

The Message Editor uses a couple of mechanisms to make sure that two people don't destroy each other's changes when working on the same file.

If you are the first person to use ME on a message file, the file will be locked until you finish with it. If another person tries to use that file, they will only be able to view it without making changes. The title of the file at the top of the window will include "(Read Only)" to indicate this fact. The file has its read-only attribute set during this period, so you can manually unlock a file if necessary by using the DOS command **ATTRIB** command to unlock it, like so:

ATTRIB -R xxx.MSG

where **xxx.MSG** represents the name of the actual file.

The other situation where a file is locked is when you are adding a new define (noun, verb, talker or case). If you add it while entering a message, the file is locked for just the time it takes to update. If you bring up the list box for the particular kind of define, the file is locked during the time you have the list box open.

MENU COMMANDS

System Menu

System | About

The About Box shows the current version and date of the Message Editor, copyright information, and who wrote it.

File Menu

File | Open

This lets you open a message file to work with. The equivalent hotkey is F3.

File | New

This lets you start from scratch and create a new message file.

File | Save

This choice saves the current message file. The hotkey is F2.

File | Save As

This lets you save the current message file under a different name. You would use this choice if you're saving an new (untitled) file, or if you want to save to a different drive or directory, or if you simply want to make a copy of the current file under a different name.

File | Print

This choice prints the current message file.

You can print in four formats: full, abbreviated, text-only, or Message Compiler-compatible. The abbreviated format resembles the display on the main screen: there is one line for each message, which is truncated to fit. Text-only just prints the text of each message. The Message Compiler format adds the special codes the Message Compiler uses to identify message parts like noun or verb. This can be handy if you need to make a lot of changes to a message file: just print to a Message Compiler-compatible file, make your changes using your preferred word processor, then run the Message Compiler on the result to recreate the message file.

You can print the current file or a set of files. If the latter, you specify the files you want to print by listing file specifications (like **1*.MSG**) separated by spaces or semicolons.

You have the choice of printing to a file or directly to the printer. If you print to the printer, you must either have a local printer or have run the NetWare **CAPTURE** command to send print output to the network printer. If you print to a text file, you can use the text file for viewing in Brief. You can also print it later using **NPRINT** or **SP**.

The **SP** program on the network uses compressed print and adds its own header. If you print to a file and want to use **SP** to print that file later, check the **SP Output** option, which will use a wider page width and a shorter page height to accomodate **SP**. This is especially useful with the abbreviated format.

The equivalent hot key is F4.

File | Nouns

This lets you add and delete nouns or change their names. It is equivalent to editing the current file's **.SHM** file without worrying about assigning unique numbers. The hotkey is F5.

File | Verbs

This lets you add and delete verbs or change their names. It is equivalent to editing the **VERBS.SH** without worrying about assigning unique numbers. The hotkey is F6.

File | Cases

This lets you add and delete cases or change their names. It is equivalent to editing the current file's **.SHM** without worrying about assigning unique numbers. The equivalent hotkey is F7.

File | Talkers

This lets you add and delete talkers or change their names. It is equivalent to editing **TALKERS.SH** without worrying about assigning unique numbers. The equivalent hotkey is F8.

File | Exit

Use this choice to exit the Message Editor. The equivalent hotkey is Alt+X.

Edit Menu

The Edit Menu contains choices for adding, deleting, copying, pasting and clearing items from lists. Usually you'll use these commands on the message list. But they can also be used when you have the nouns, verbs, cases or talkers list on the screen (see the File Menu).

Edit | Add

This choice lets you add a new item. A dialog box will pop up for you to add the information for the new item. The noun, verb, case and sequence number default to adding the new message to the end of the current sequence. After accepting the dialog, the item will be inserted into the list in alphabetical order. The equivalent hotkey is Ins.

Edit | Change

This choice lets you change the currently highlighted item. After changing the item's information in the dialog box, the item will be moved in the list, if necessary to keep it in alphabetical order. The equivalent hotkey is Enter.

Edit | Cut

This choice deletes an entry and copies it to the scrap, where it can be inserted back via the Edit|Paste or Edit|Paste Add command. Unlike with the Edit|Clear command, you won't be asked to confirm your choice, since if you make a mistake you can just paste the entry back. If the deletion creates a gap in a message sequence, you will be asked if you want to renumber the sequence to close up the gap. The equivalent hotkey is Shift+Del.

Edit | Copy

This choice copies the current entry to the scrap, where it can be inserted back via the Edit|Paste or Edit|Paste Add command. The equivalent hotkey is Ctrl+Ins.

Edit | Paste

This choice inserts the entry in the scrap into the current sequence in the list. Entries go into the scrap when they are copied or pasted. If the noun, verb or case of the inserted message is different from that of the current sequence, you will be asked to confirm your choice. The equivalent hotkey is Shift+Ins.

Edit | Paste Add

This choice adds the entry in the scrap at the end of the current sequence in the list. Entries go into the scrap when they are copied or pasted. If the noun, verb or case of the added message is different from that of the current sequence, you will be asked to confirm your choice. The equivalent hotkey is Ctrl+A.

Edit | Clear

This choice deletes an entry without copying it to the scrap. You might use this if you don't want to overwrite the entry already in the scrap. You will be asked to confirm the deletion. If the deletion creates a gap in a message sequence, you will be asked if you want to renumber the sequence to close up the gap. The equivalent hotkey is Del.

Edit | Insert in sequence

This choice is like Edit|Add except that the new message is inserted into the sequence instead of being added to the end. The equivalent hotkey is Ctrl+I.

Edit | Renumber sequence

This choice renumbers the sequence numbers in the current sequence. The equivalent hotkey is Ctrl+R.

View Menu

View | Center

The choice centers the currently selected message in the screen. The equivalent hotkey is Ctrl+C.

Search Menu

Search | Find

This menu choice lets you specify what to search for and what files to search in. You can search for any combination of message text, noun, verb, case, talker, and comment text.

If you want to search for text either in a message or in a comment, enter it in the "Message text" or "Comment text" field, respectively. Any text can be searched for, and can include spaces and partial

words. Both these fields maintain history lists, indicated by the arrow at the right. When the cursor is in one of these fields, you can view and choose from your previous entries by pressing Down Arrow.

You can also search for a specific noun, verb, case and talker. The verb and talker fields are combo box fields, which means you can press Down Arrow in them to see a list of all verbs and talkers.

You can combine any of these fields to find inclusive matches. For example, you can enter "boots" in the "Message text" field and "ROGER" in the talker field to find all messages where Rogers says "boots".

You next decide whether to search in the current file, or in a set of files. If you choose to search a set of files, you can specify the files by entering a wildcard in the "Files to search" field. You can also just enter the name of a single file in this field.

If you are searching a set of files, and the current file has unsaved changes, you will be asked if you want to save before searching other files.

You can choose to make the search case-sensitive by checking the corresponding field.

If a match is found, the file is displayed and the message with the match is highlighted.

Search | Find Next

This choice repeats the previous search, if it was successful. The search begins at the current position in the current file. If you had chosen to search a set of files, then next file in the set will then be searched.

The equivalent hotkey is Ctrl+L.

Audio Menu

You can play and hear the recorded audio files for messages by using commands on the {Audio} menu. After an audio starts to play, you can cancel it by pressing any key or clicking the mouse.

The Message Editor uses the standard 'where' file to specify the audio driver to use ("audDrv=") and where the audio files are located ("audio="). If your 'where' file has a different name than WHERE or if it's located in another directory, using the -w command line option. The "audDMA=", "audIRQ" and "audioSize" entries in the 'where' file are respected to indicate the DMA line, IRQ line and buffer size respectively.

Audio | Play

The Audio|Play menu choice plays the current message's audio file. You can also invoke this command by clicking on the corresponding entry in the status line.

To stop the currently playing audio, press any key or click the mouse.

The equivalent hotkey is Ctrl+P.

Audio | Play Rest

This menu choice plays the current message's audio, then continues by playing the rest of the messages in the file. To stop playing, press any key or click the mouse.

The equivalent hotkey is Ctrl+A.

Audio | Toggle Audio File Names

This menu choice toggles the display of message audio file names in the message list.

TRANSLATING

To translate message files, start ME with the -t command line option.

When you translate, you work with two files simultaneously: a source file you specify at the command line or via the File|Open menu choice, and a translation file with the same name and an extension of .TRN. You can use a different extension by putting the extension after the -t option on the command line. To use .GER as the extension of the translation file, start ME with -tGER.

You can't change or add messages to the source file. When you choose the Edit|Change command you will be able to enter the translation text into the translation field, but you won't be able to change the original. You can't translate reference messages. Other commands are disabled that aren't needed for translation work.

You can copy and paste between translated messages. When you paste, the currently selected message's translation text is replaced with the text you copied.

Whenever a message is added or changed in the original file, it is stamped with the current date. When that message is translated (or a change is made to its translation), the message in the translation file is stamped with the original's datestamp. Therefore, the Message Editor can show you which messages have changed since they were last translated. Such messages are displayed in red (or have an asterisk beside them).

If a message's noun, verb, case or sequence changes after it has been translated, the next time that file is edited with the Message Editor, the translated message's noun, verb, case or sequence is changed to match and a message to this effect is displayed.

If an original message is deleted, the next time the translated file is edited with the Message Editor the translated message will be deleted. A message to this effect is displayed.

The MEXLTDIF utility can be used to display the differences between original files and the translation files. Type MEXLTDIF for usage instructions.

CHANGES HISTORY

- 5.000 6/22/94 Use new resource type.
- 4.340 4/5/94 Use A for audio file name prefix instead of #. Use RESOURCE.CFG instead of WHERE.
- 4.321 3/15/93 Fixed bug where initializing read-only field was overwriting memory.
- 4.320 2/11/93 Temporarily permit sequence numbers of 36, but warn them.
- 4.310 2/10/93 Read 'audioSize=' parameter in where file to set audio buffer size.
- 4.300 1/27/93 Added audio support.
- 4.211 1/13/93 Fixed memory leak from new StringF class. Disable Edit|Renumber Sequence if no messages in list. Disable file list in Search|Find dialog box initially.
- 4.210 12/16/92 Change maximum sequence number to 35. When inserting, only renumber subsequent messages until we hit a gap. Respect maximum sequence number when adding or inserting.
- 4.200 12/16/92 Made Edit|Paste insert into sequence and added Edit|Paste Add. Defaulted Search|Find to searching current file.
- 4.110 11/10/92 Don't eat EMS and don't hang if EMS isn't present.
- 4.100 11/2/92 Don't allow changing talker in a message that references. Don't consider a message with noun, verb and case "ALL" referenced. Removed 80386 code.
- 4.010 8/20/92 Changed page height when printing to avoid overfilling pages when printed on the HP LaserJet.
- 4.000 8/6/92 Changed file format to include timestamps and reference sequence numbers (just in case they're ever needed).
- Added reference fields.
- Allow searching for translated text.
- Added ability to turn off pagination (including page headers) when printing. Delete message file when writing, so that the network owner is updated. Fixed bug that didn't allow adding new messages when the previous file edited was read-only. Fixed bug where accidentally typing characters into a readonly memo field activated hotkeys. Fixed some inconsistencies with disabling commands when file is readonly or being translated, or when a definitions list box is up.
- 3.411 7/24/92 Replaced 386 with 286 code generation.

- 3.410 7/20/92 Changed to BC++ 3.1. Added optimizations, including 386 code generation. Replaced | with paragraph symbol in message list. Fixed bug in TV library where using a combo box list to enter a string of maximum length showed garbage in the field.
- 3.400 7/8/92 Added new sequence number capabilities: adding adds to end of sequence, deleting asks if user wants to close up sequence. New commands added for inserting into and renumbering a sequence.
- Made next/prior buttons use original message fields to determine what is considered "next" or "prior."
- Augmented -t command line option to allow following it with extension of translation file. Added -h command line option to put screen in 50 line mode. Change program exit accelerator key to Alt+F4, but still allow Alt+X.
- Fixed bug where copying and then pasting a define gave it a number of 0 instead of assigning a new number. Fixed bug where a missing .SHM file didn't default correctly.
- 3.340 6/10/92 Removed heapchecking from TV library, which was slowing file reading down enormously. Don't reread define lists unless file's timestamp changed. Show whether editing nouns or cases in lists instead of just showing file name. Changed status messages to display in the middle of the screen. Give audible signals when searching. Prohibit deleting, copying or changing 'ALL' define. Changed hotkey for noun field to Alt+U.
- 3.331 6/5/92 Added 'text-only' print format. Fixed message box displayed when printing so box is big enough for filename. Messages can be copied even if file is read-only.
- 3.330 6/5/92 Wordwrap added.
- Confirm cancelling out of a define list if changes made. Made so compiler-format print output doesn't pad end of lines with blanks.
- .SHM file is always searched for and/or created in same directory as associated message file. Fixed inconsequential bug where .SHM file wasn't marked with correct version number.
- Make so deleting a message updates the bottom box.
- 3.270 4/29/92 Added support for printing a set of files at once.
- When editing and using Next and Prior buttons, don't move edit window. Default talker to NARRATOR.
- 3.260 Main window shows complete define names instead of truncating them. Added a message pane below list to show more of selected message.
- Added "abbreviated" print option. Added "SP output" option.
- Added View menu with Center choice.

Added Next and Prior buttons to edit dialog.

Updated translation support. Allow editing a define file even if current message file is locked. Removed "Shift+Del Cut" from status line to avoid someone accidentally clicking on it while scrolling.

- 3.250 Fixed bug where editing a define could change its number. Fixed bug where editing a message without changing it could make the program think the file had been modified. Fixed bug where adding the same case to two different files one right after the other hung the program.
- 3.241 4/3/92 Added ability to search for text in comments. Added pick lists for choosing verbs and talkers to search for. Removed message warning that file is readonly.
- 3.240 4/2/92 Added ability to search for nouns, verbs, cases and/or talkers.
- 3.231 4/2/92 Fixed bug where escaping from defines list didn't unlock the associated file.
- 3.230 4/1/92 Enabled search function to search file(s) for text in messages.
- Added better error checking for insufficient memory. Fixed bug preventing alpha-selection from case list.
- 3.220 3/27/92 Fixed bug where escaping from cases list hung machine. Made it so escaping from cases, defines, talkers and verbs list without having made any changes didn't reread header file.
- Changed some limits: maximum noun, verb or case number is now 255; max module number is 46656; and max sequence number is 36.
- 3.211 3/26/92 Fixed bug where cutting then pasting dumped user to DOS. Fixed bug that prevented talker numbers from appearing in the talkers list. Flush keyboard after a list box key so user can hold down arrow keys, e.g., and scrolling will stop as soon as he lets up. Added doubleclick capability to list box.
- 3.210 3/12/92 Fixed several memory corruption bugs by changing to new list box management scheme.
- 3.200 2/25/92 Worked around Turbo Vision bug where inserting text at end of a message could cause it to be lost. Increased maximum number of verbs to 256 and decreased maximum number of nouns from 999 to 255.
- 3.117 2/21/92 First printed documentation.