

Computer Aided Translation

A Translator's Personal Experience

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Disclaimers

- I have no business relationships with any manufacturers in regard with any software products mentioned here.
- The information provided here were mainly based on my personal experience and for information only.
- There is no guarantee whatsoever about the accuracy, completeness, and correctness of the information contained in this presentation.

What is CAT?

- CAT stands for *Computer Aided Translation*.
- Most professional translators should have a basic idea of CAT by now. No further introduction will be given in this presentation.

The Ultimate Objective of CAT

- To a pro, a CAT application, when used properly, should be able to help him/her to gain a competitive edge!
- But how:
 - By improving translation quality; and
 - By raising translator's productivity
 - Reducing stress of translator
 - Speeding up translation works

Requirements of CAT products

- Better translation quality
 - Term consistency
 - Segment/sentence consistency
 - Reduction of missing sentence/paragraph incidences

Requirements of CAT products

- Maximized Productivity
 - Excellent terminology management
 - Fast database searching
 - Flexible
 - Robust -- not easy to crash
 - Efficient usage of desktop real estate

Requirements of CAT products

- Easy-to-Learn?
 - Not necessarily -- a Pro should be willing to invest in time to gain the edge
- Can handle many file formats?
 - Not necessarily -- text-only and HTML are the mostly used file types by this translator

Do CAT Products Meet These Requirement?

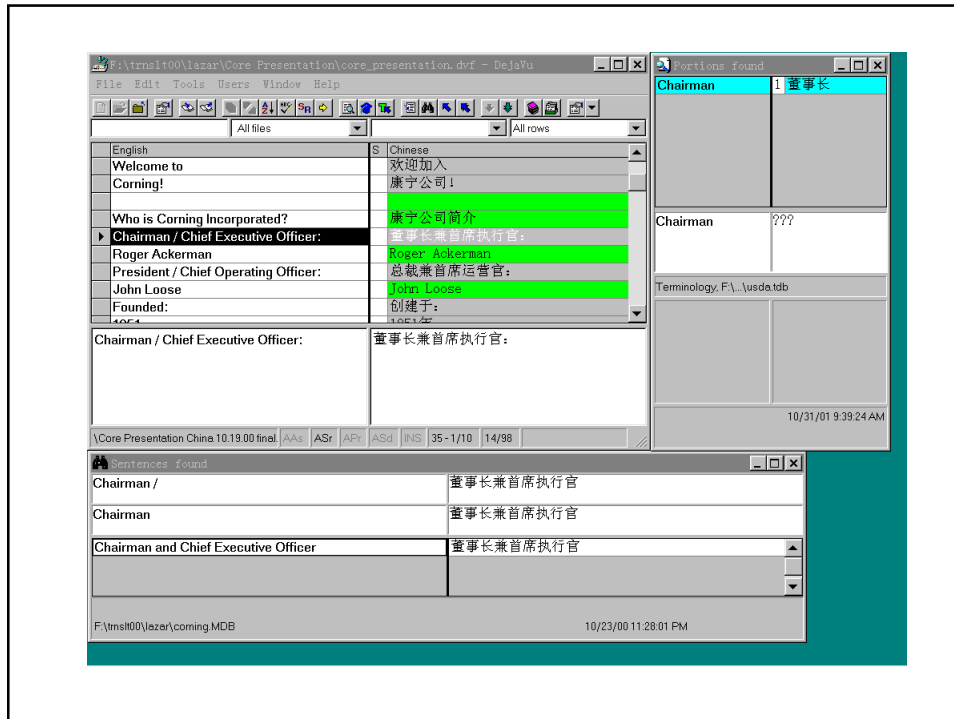
- Three Products, with which this translator has hand-on experience, will be compared in several key areas:
 - TRADOS Freelance Version 3
 - Déjà vu
 - IBM TranslationManager v2.5

Terminology Management

- A key component, w/ obvious importance
 - Keeping translators updated with new terms or client-specific terms
 - Contributing the consistency of translations
- Comparing with Déjà vu or IBM TM, TRADOS MultiTerm **isn't** worth much, if anything.

Déjà vu

- Glossaries can be updated dynamically
- Different forms, singular or plural, of nouns not be recognized
- Different tenses of verbs not recognized



TRADOS MultiTerm

- Adding new entries in MultiTerm is incredibly tedious.
- When importing list(s) of terms into new or existing databases, no recognition of identical source or target translations
- Different tenses of verbs not recognized

IBM TranslationManager

- Terminology management easy to use yet very powerful -- tons of useful information can be stored, if so chosen.
- Glossaries can be updated dynamically and with extreme ease
- Different forms, singular or plural, of common nouns are recognized
- Different tenses of common verbs are recognized

IBM TranslationManager

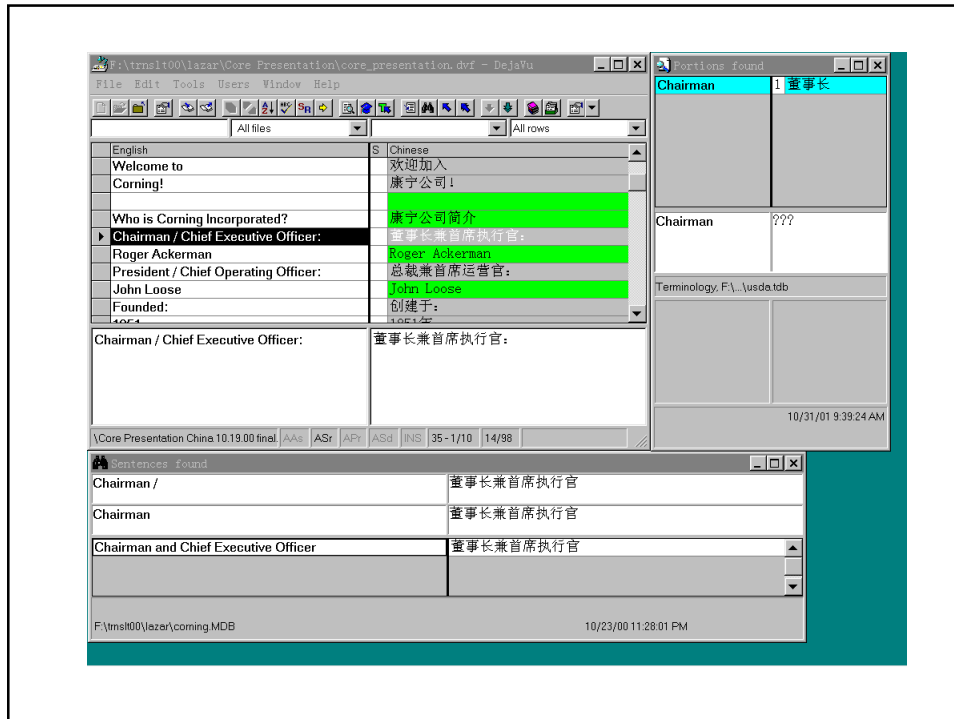
- When importing list(s) of terms into new or existing databases, identical source terms or target translations are recognized.
- When the source term is identical, choice is given on whether to merge, discard new or replace existing

Translation Environment

- Another key component, directly affecting translators' productivity
- Again, IBM TranslationManager is a clear winner of the three products

Déjà vu

- Table layout wastes precious screen space and loses context information -- although a hot key (F6) will bring up the source context page.
- "Help" may need adjustment.
- Wasteful use of screen space



Déjà vu

- One glossary at a time
 - Impossible to use a reference glossary
 - Very hard to keep track of new entries or revised entries
- No source and proposal(s) comparisons
- Hot keys or key combinations are hard to remember.

TRADOS Workbench

- Working directly in MS Word
 - Easy to Use
 - Easy to preserve formatting of MS Word documents
 - Inherited MS Word macro's shortcomings, especially the speed
 - Hidden tags easy to damage
- Concordance function searches for part of a sentence in the memory

TRADOS Workbench

- One glossary at a time.
 - Impossible to use a reference glossary
 - Very hard to keep track of new entries or revised entries
- **Terms fail to show up in the Workbench windows**
- Terms found need to be scrolled one by one, very time consuming

TRADOS Workbench

- Setting up is complicated and counter-intuitive.
- Hard to remember all the options.
 - For example, One could have more than one 100% matches, which is not a default setting. Tried many times, could not find that option. Even with the option, it will show only one match at a time, very easy to miss the next one.

TRADOS Workbench

- Source text comparison is flawed.
- Source or Translation boxes could be scrolled off the active window of the MS Word.

TRADOS Workbench

- Shortcut keys were not ergonomically assigned
- Memory file corrupts easily
 - Takes time to rebuild the memory
- Document file corrupts easily. Sometimes requiring careful manual fixing
- Wasteful use of screen space

TRADOS Workbench

- Working for a while without "save all" could cause MS Word to crash and take the unsaved translation away with it.
 - Probably due to a overflow of the Word's Undo buffer.
- The PowerPoint interface may not work due to a missing font.

IBM TranslationManager

- No concordance function -- though this shortcoming can be compensated by searching directly in the memory file.
- For Chinese translation, I had only made it work for text-only and HTML files.
- Text segmentation and wrapping in the editor window is flawed.

IBM TranslationManager

- Multiple glossaries can be used together.
 - Allowing the use of reference glossaries
 - keeping track of new entries or revised entries is a piece of cake
 - Dictionary indicator indicates the source of a found term

IBM TranslationManager

- Very robust, almost never crashes
- Blistering fast
 - Searching for terms
 - Searching for next un-translated sentence
- Everything from one interface -- easy to manage
- Shortcut keys are much better designed
- Source text comparison is much better.

IBM TranslationManager

- Very efficient in using the precious screen space
- Very easy to use, most of the functions can be accomplished by only using keyboard.
- Highly configurable
- Identical segments within the same document could have different translations. Both would be saved.

Other features

Déjà vu

- Popular among some translators
- Constantly improving
- Handles many file formats
- Free upgrades and updates

TRADOS Workbench

- de facto industry standard tool
 - many agencies use it
 - some demand that translators have it
 - there may be existing memories and glossaries, which may or may not be beneficial
- A selling point for translators who have the software

TRADOS Workbench

- Expensive upgrade(s) -- cost me \$240.00 to upgrade from Freelance v1 to v3 with no obvious improvements to me.
- Dongles could fail.

IBM TranslationManager

- All databases can be exported into pure-text files for easy manipulations
- Expensive. A full copy of the current version (2.60) costs around \$1,800.00. An upgrade from v1.0 costs around \$1,000.00
- Further development have been stagnant
- No presence at ATA annual conference
- Not many people use it

Conclusion

- CAT technology can improve translation quality and translator productivity.
- There are huge gaps between different products.
- One should evaluate one's own situation to determine whether CAT would be beneficial.

Thank you very much!