



PASS ON AN OTHER CONTINENT

Is the global market ready for Passolo?
Is Passolo ready for the global market?

Written by:
CHRISTOPHE
DECLERCQ

Shortly after appearing on the market, we reviewed Passolo in the July 1999 issue of the forerunner to *International Journal for Language & Documentation, Language Today*. Christophe Declercq now has a look at the new, improved version 2.0.0., which, amongst other features, includes Unicode support

Traditional translation processes can be viewed as adapting the functionality of a source text into a text that can be understood by a culturally and/or linguistically different target group. To demonstrate once more that the translation business is an area where system analyses and workflows are no longer traditional, translation processes are not only accompanied by relatively new phenomena such as translation memories, terminology databases and content localisation, but the industry is having to come to terms at an increasing rate with its own new technological nature by means of software localisation: adapting the functionality, user-interface and other multimedia assets of a particular product to the specific cultural preferences of the target market - software users prefer their interfaces to be in their mother tongue.

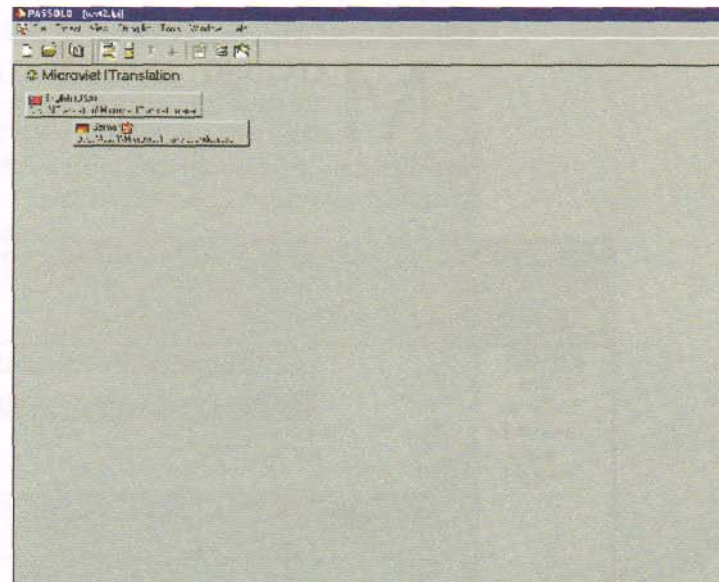
In order to remain competitive, concurrent release of software versions in different languages has become an important factor for companies who sell their software as stand-alone products or as a system component. Developing a localised product, however, traditionally involved delay and extra cost. To help translators, software engineers and project managers optimise the software localisation process without the inevitable assistance of a software-development department, HEISOFT Publishing AG developed Passolo, its software localisation program. According to its makers, Passolo does not require access to source files, as it processes .EXE and .DLL files directly, reuses existing translations, and includes integrated glossaries and a quality-check function. However, is the global market really ready for Passolo? Or, more importantly, is Passolo ready to globalise your software market?

essential visual aid. Icons and status information provide a quick overview of the progress of the translation project.

The information in the Project Set-up dialog, together with the options, allows the software localiser to easily administer and edit very complex translation projects, even those being translated into several languages simultaneously.

After the project is properly defined, Passolo extracts all text resources from the .EXE file automatically, creating both source and target lists. In fact, the listings simply sum up all traceable text strings and, in the target file, a bi-textual terminology list can be found in the form of an organised table view. Language identity can be specified with a primary ID, e.g. Dutch, and a secondary ID, e.g. Belgian. In addition, Passolo offers a standard terminology

database of about 700 terms in five languages. Whether in English, German, French, Italian or Spanish, most current user interface strings are listed ('file', 'edit', 'toolbar', etc.). Moreover, projects consisting of any number of programs, as well as DLLs, requiring translation into any number of languages, can easily be jointly managed by Passolo. The translation project can be exported/separated by program and language



LOCALISING SOURCE STRINGS INTO TRANSLATION LISTS Creating a localisation project with Passolo is very easy via the Project Set-up dialog. The content file is loaded and source and target languages are specified. From then onwards the project dialog appears to be the

and then imported again once the translation has been completed. This feature allows splitting the project over several team members.

The translated target program files can be generated by a simple button click. Each target string can be autotranslated by means of the standard terminology

menus, etc. Normally if this occurs, the UI elements need to be resized with the help of specialised software tools, such as Resource Workshop for example. Passolo, however, somewhat easily solves this problem by three dots.

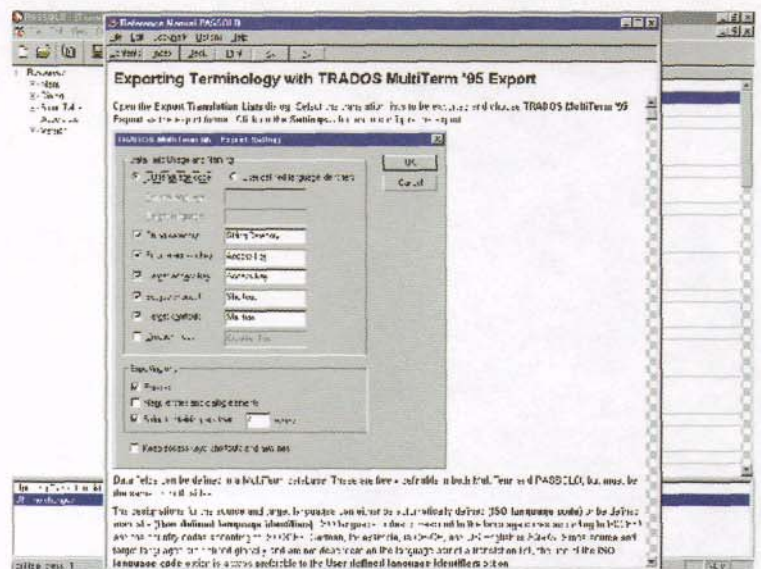
THE MAKERS' WILL AGREED UPON.

Passolo indeed de-skills localisation tasks. It enables translators, software engineers and project managers to manage localisation projects even if it is the first time an organisation is localising software.[RGC4] For veteran localisation teams, Passolo provides an easy-to-learn project management environment ensuring productivity and re-use of previously translated strings. It also ensures translation consistency both within a project and from project to project. Translation managers can embark on localisation projects consisting of any number of programs into any number of languages. And last, but, in this ever faster period with its constant let's-have-some-technological-wit-and-therefore-have-it-compensate-the-budget-in-other-areas atmosphere, not least, swift software localisation, as here with Passolo, reduces localisation costs and gives an immediate return on investment. All this, of course, along with the already known benefits of inbuilt glossaries, translation aids, and re-use of translated strings from previous projects, speeds up the translation process and reduces cost.

IN BRIEF. Passolo is a small, beautifully designed translation tool that automatically extracts strings from EXE files and DLL files. No access to source files is necessary for EXE-files and DLLs are processed directly. Translators will find the WYSIWYG editor a huge improvement over a plain text editor.

The Passolo Programmer's and Professional Editions hardly differ in features. Both versions share the following:

- alignment of already translated projects
- only new or changed text resources need to be translated in updates
- Unicode support for Asian languages
- Integrated dialog-editor
- Editor for bitmaps, icons and cursors
- Automated translation based on integrated
- Quality check functions
- Advanced fuzzy match algorithm to reuse similar translations
- DLL-interface to handle non-standard resources
- Borland Delphi and Borland C++ Builder support as a DLL add-in
- Support to internationalise and localise Microsoft Visual Basic applications



- Batch-mode to automate the generation of target files from within the development environment
- Generating language-only-DLLs from EXE-files
- Configurable export- and import formats

The Professional Edition also has two extra features: the extendable export-/import interface using DLL add-ins and detailed statistics counting words and characters.

Ease of Use



Aesthetic Appeal



Speed



Claims vs Reality



System requirements:

Passolo is dongle-protected. Operating System: PC with Intel Processor 80486/100 or Pentium. Windows 9x, Windows NT, Windows 2000 and even Windows CE. At least 8 MB of free space on your hard disk.

Prices vary

(depending on Edition and source) Passolo Programmer's Edition is only available from the distributors for _ 600. The Professional Edition is available from PASS Engineering for _ 750. The Passolo ADD-In for TRADOS, available only from PASS Engineering, costs _ 750. Via <http://www.davecentral.com/8191.html> Passolo seems to be available as shareware for \$450.

Check out these sites for further information: www.passolo.com and www.heisoft.de.