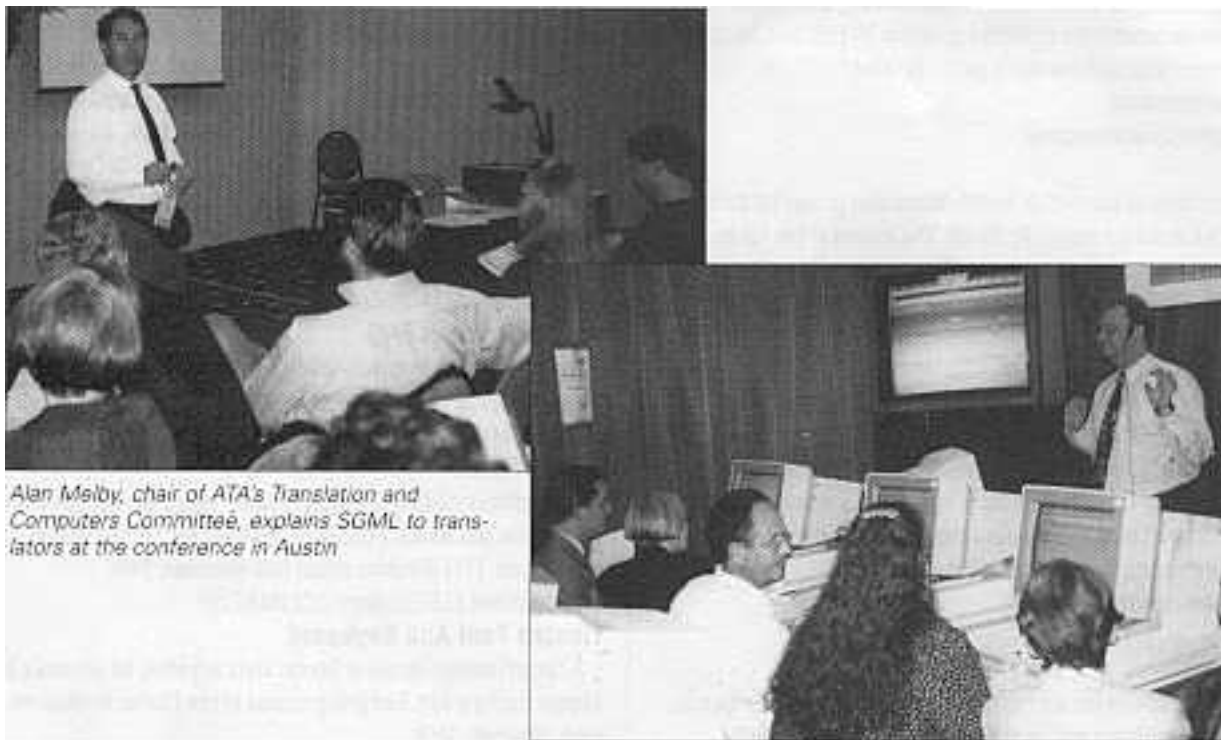


# CONFERENCE REPORT



Alan Masby, chair of ATA's Translation and Computers Committee, explains SGML to translators at the conference in Austin.

## ATA

*IBM's Marc Hoffmann guides ATA conference attendees through a practice translation using IBM's TranslationManager*

## CONFERENCE

Language technology products were a hot item at the 35th Annual Conference of the American Translators Association in Austin, Texas. Some industry observers were beginning to wonder whether translators ever were going to wake up to the benefits of using translation tools, but apparently they finally have caught on. There were a few questions from the audience such as "What is a string?" or "What is an RTF file?" which made one wonder whether all translators are really ready for such tools. But, on the question of whether they WANT such tools, the verdict is in: The answer is a resounding YES!

IBM made quite a splash with its well-planned release of two new versions of its translation memory tool, TranslationManager: a Windows version and a version for individual translators. TranslationManager has been around for several years, but the original version required OS/2, and OS/2 has not gained wide acceptance in the translation community, which is starting only now to accept Windows and is still largely DOS-based.

Another IBM product which attracted enormous interest was the Personal Dictation System, a voice-recognition product. Many full-time translators type so much that they develop tendinitis and eventually turn to dictating as a way of saving their wrists. According to Günther Jornitz of IBM Deutschland, IBM has been developing voice recognition technology on larger computers for more than 20 years, but only recently decided to port it to the PC.

The Translator's Workbench, a well-known translation memory tool by Trados which has been around in a DOS version for several years, is available now in a true Windows version. A text alignment tool also is available to create translation memory from translations which were done without using the Translator's Workbench. These and other language technology tools are distributed in North America by MCB Systems in San Diego.

The Eurolang Optimizer, a new translation memory tool which made news when Microsoft chose it for its worldwide product localization, is impressive in its capabilities but did not attract as much attention probably because of its high price. Eurolang Optimizer was demonstrated

together with the Logos machine translation system.

GlobalWare, which had developed three manager's versions of its translation tool XL8 to handle code, Windows help files and documentation, has now combined the manager's versions into one product and also is now offering XL8 in a less-expensive version aimed at individuals.

There were a number of terminology management tools displayed, including Language Navigator, which supports Japanese as well as European languages and is one of the few such tools available on the Macintosh platform; MultiTerm by Trados and MIX, both of which are now available in Windows versions; Termbase for Windows; and Kanji Base. CD-ROM reference materials finally are becoming affordable: the French and English CD-ROM database Termium, which is produced by the Canadian government, now is available for under US\$500.

- by *Tom Hedden*