Psychic debugging: Why Chinese characters don't work

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Raymond Chen

Here's a walkthrough of an actual case of psychic debugging.

> I'm using the internal XYZ table-generating tool, but it appears to be useless in my case. Does this tool work? Right now, I'm just resorting to the manual method of generating my data table (Chinese and English).

Hooray for vague questions! "It appears to be useless." But there were enough tiny clues in the question that made it possible to make a psychic guess. First of all, the parenthetical "Chinese and English" suggests that there are Chinese characters in the data being passed to the XYZ table-generating tool. Second of all, one might make a guess that the file encoding is wrong. Maybe the XYZ program expects the file to be in UTF-8 format, but you're saving it in UTF-16 format. Maybe the XYZ program supports only ASCII data.

I never heard back, which could have meant that my psychic powers were right, or it could have meant that my psychic powers were wrong, but the person figured, "No point asking this guy, all he does is make random guesses based on incomplete information."

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