

Brief report on the MT2010 MT Roadmap Workshop at the MT Summit in Santiago de Compostela (September 2001)

The aim of the workshop was to contribute to ELSNET's ongoing action to establish a road map for MT for the next decade. A road map comprises an analysis of the present situation, a vision of where we want to be in ten years from now, and a number of intermediate milestones that would help in setting intermediate goals and in measuring our progress towards our goals.

The function of the road map is not to impose anything on anyone, but rather to provide a broadly supported definition of a context in which to position the MT community's efforts, which would allow us to identify common priorities for joint activities in e.g. research, resources and training.

For this workshop we invited papers that

- gave critical analyses of the present state of the art in machine translation of written and spoken language,
- presented visions of the future of machine translation, both from a technological and from an application point of view, or
- identified major milestones and challenges on our way towards the future, and/or ways to measure our progress along the road.

As the workshop was planned as a half-day event, we could only accommodate a limited number of papers.

The nine papers that were selected for this workshop covered broadly three different aspects of MT. The first group of papers (by Gerber, Schütz, Boitet, Farwell and Helmreich, Och and Ney) all addressed the question: where to go? Each of them sketched its own perspective of a potentially successful future for MT.

The second group of papers (Macklovitch and Valderrábanos, Flournoy and Callison-Burch) dealt with the role of interaction in MT, and made it clear that the topic may be old, but far from obsolete. The last two papers were different in that they did not specifically address the future development of MT, but rather reminded us of two issues that we should not ignore when discussing the Big Problems and the Grand Challenges that lie ahead of us.

The paper by Tsou and Kwong clearly illustrated that the notion of problem is relative: what counts as a non-problem when translating between Western European languages (translation of personal names) turns out to be a really hard problem when translating between e.g. Chinese and English.

Probst *et al* drew our attention to the existence of low-density languages, where the lack of commercial interest may make it hard for speakers of those languages to get access to translation facilities and hence to the multilingual information society.

All participants were asked to complete a questionnaire identifying the main challenges reflected in each paper. The evaluation of the questionnaires is ongoing, and the results will be presented as a discussion paper at the next MT Roadmap workshop, which will take place in conjunction with the TMI 2002 conference in Keihanna, Japan, in March 2002.

The papers of the MT Summit workshop can be found on the ELSNET website at <http://www.elsnet.org/mt2010.html>, and the input documents and results of the TMI workshop can be found at <http://www.elsnet.org/roadmap-tmi2002.html>.

Those who are interested in all the papers presented at the MT Summit conference and workshops are invited to visit <http://www.eamt.org/summitVIII/papers.html> or to order the CDROM.

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