

Introductory remarks
by the Chairman
J. Albert BACHRACH

The introduction of machine translation into an existing translation department is a delicate matter which gives rise to a variety of problems.

Machine translation is not just a photographic reproduction of human translation. The computer is able to produce the same number of translated pages considerably faster than the human translator. The revision of texts produced by human translators differs considerably from post-editing, as the reports on post-editors' experience will clearly show.

However, the main problem is how to insert MT into the usual activities of a translation department, without either disturbing the smooth flow of work or disrupting the functioning of the department. This necessitates very careful planning. But here another problem arises.

Translation departments generally have a central planning office where the documents are registered and distributed to the language divisions. Only they can decide whether a certain text seems suitable for MT. So far it has only been possible to make this choice on the basis of personal experience.

Although a text typology may be useful as a guide for the decision maker, it has not yet proved possible to elaborate a watertight typology for the reasons set out in my paper on the subject, which was presented to last year's Translators' Guild Seminar in my absence by Mr. REICHLING.

The main difficulty resides in the fact that more often than not various subjects are covered in the same document and that the ultimate destination of the text is frequently not known.

In order to make sure that no delays occur our translators carry on normally with their work even if a machine translation has also been asked for. Once they receive the translation produced by the computer they examine it to see whether it may be used completely or in part with a minimum of post-editing.

I should also like to stress that whereas there are seven official languages, SYSTRAN is only used for English into French and Italian, and French into English.

Statistics show a considerable increase in the number of pages translated by machine since March 1981 when we started a new experimental operation.

The following figures may be of interest:

	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u> (as from March)
FR - EN	30	100	407 (781)
EN - FR	30	109	295
EN - IT	15	36	161

In the course of to-day's session several post-editors will give you an account of their experience.