

Panel on International Cooperation

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Cooperation between nations logically includes cooperation between member States of the European Community. This is where the "subsidiarity principle" is applicable; it says that the EC Commission must do only what the Member States cannot do themselves. In our subject field this concerns the coordinated development of standards for language resources and linguistic models.

The E.C. has 12 member states and 9 working languages. Since a number of other countries have applied for membership, this might well lead to the introduction of Swedish, Finnish and maybe Norwegian, Hungarian, Polish and Czech before the end of the century. First contacts have been taken with the academic authorities of these countries.

Cooperation outside the European Community includes industrialized and developing countries as well as a special initiative in favour of Central and East European countries.

The Community has launched a number of programmes aimed at helping these countries to overcome economic and technological barriers hampering trade and communication with the West. The PHARE programme covers Poland, Hungary and the Czech and Slovak Republics; the TACIS programme covers the Community of Independent States which emerged from the former Soviet Union; the COPERNICUS and TEMPUS programmes cover specific topics for all these countries, including language technologies and resources.

Little has been done up to now for developing countries in the course of industrialization, but cooperation agreements are being discussed with countries like India, Brazil and China.

The mainstream of international cooperation lies between the three major economic blocks: North America, i.e. the U.S. and Canada, South East Asia under Japanese leadership, and the European Community. The leading organizations are A.R.P.A. and the National Science Foundation in the U.S., M.I.T.I. and J.E.I.D.A. in Japan and the E.C. Commission in Europe.

Cooperation in the language field covers the following topics:

1. Representative text corpora: The Commission uses the SGML standard; it participates in the Text Encoding Initiative and is presently developing a European network of corpora in all 9 languages.
2. Lexical resources: The Commission has launched the MULTILEX project for the development of a lexical standard and coordinates a number of European projects involving lexical developments through an advisory group consisting of the projects leaders.
3. The development of speech resources, based on the SAM standard is progressing slowly.

Joint efforts between a number of countries will be necessary to accelerate the development and re-use of these resources through the creation of repositories, the acceptance of common evaluation criteria and methodologies and extensive awareness initiatives to promote the worldwide use of common standards, tools, resources and evaluation criteria.

To prove that it is fully involved in international cooperation in the language field, the Commission offers to organize and subsidize the next MT Summit in Luxembourg in 1995.

We hope that all the participants of the Kobe Summit will come to Luxembourg in 1995 and enjoy both the conference and the site.