

[Machine Translation Summit, September 17-19, 1987, Hakone Prince Hotel, Japan]

OUR EXPERIENCE IN USING SYSTRAN

Ryozo Akiyama, Arthur Andersen & Co.

Tokyo

Arthur Andersen & Co. is one of the biggest accounting firm in the world. I am working at the Management Information Consulting Division which is mainly concerned with planning, designing, and installing a EDP system for a business environment for our clients. METHOD/1 is our methodology consists of 9 binders written by more than 600,000 English words with various kinds of figures and diagrams. This is for designing and installing lots of types of EDP system which was originally born as a hardcopy manual, but we have evolved it to a automated manual database which can allow us to have following features.

Automatic print-out, PC-based automatic cross reference between each of the task step in the system development activity and documentation or worksheet sample produced by the each of the steps, PC-aided customization of the contents of the manual according to the clients' special requirements and environment.

When we have decided to translate all of them into Japanese, we have come to the conclusion to utilize a machine translation system. Because what we are going to translate is not simple documents, but rather magnetic information on a computer, we might as well use some kind of EDP-aided tool in the entire translation process. We were lucky because we knew Systran because we had done some consultation work for them when they have started business at here Japan. Since Systran is capable of handling documents full of figures or pictures stored on a machine-readable media, using Systran thought to be a most favorable for our translation project.

The way which we have taken is that Systran read METHOD/1's original text which is on a floppy disk and separate sentence from figures and diagrams and have the former translated by Systran while storing the latter on computer. After post-editors of a translation company did their work on a word-processor, our own personnel check the post-edited text with special attention to our own terminology or special expression. Finally, the translation and figures and diagrams are merged on computer to be printed out for publication. We require 100 % translation since the Japanese version of methodology is to be published and sold to our clients.

While we haven't had a chance to go through the raw output of Systran MT process because we only got post-edited texts from post-editors, but still without Systran we could not have had a such speed and the consistency of the translated words which cannot be expected from a manual translation.

We need to have some more time to evaluate the overall advantage of our using Systran, but we can at least point out the following characteristics.

First of all it took just a couple of hours for a first translation by Systran on a mainframe computer. Even though post-edit took some time, it is obvious that a significant amount of time is saved.

Second, each technical term is strictly translated into a single corresponding Japanese term by a perfect consistency with the use-specific dictionary tailored for Arthur Andersen & Co.

Third, since we can store whole sentences and our specific terminology dictionary available, any of the revision process become significantly easy.

At this point, honestly speaking, Systran does not save us much money, but I think that we should not be too much rushing for it right now. Machine translation world is still growing up, and our constant feedback and long-range consideration as a user will help Systran refine further and contribute to bear bigger fruit in the near future.