mechanical translation

Annual Meeting

The Association for Machine Translation and Computational Linguistics will hold its first annual meeting in the Denver Hilton Hotel, August 25 and 26. The Association meets in alternate years in conjunction with a major computer conference and a major linguistics conference. This year the dates were chosen so that the meeting would take place the two days immediately preceding the ACM National Conference in the same hotel. It is expected that many of the persons attending one meeting will also attend the other. The program for the two-day meeting includes thirty-four papers. Four foreign countries are represented, although the bulk of the papers come from the United States.

The secretary for the meeting is Professor H. H. Josselson, Wayne State University, Detroit 1, Michigan. The papers cover a wide variety of topics, including syntactic analysis, semantics, particulars of languages, theoretical linguistics, research procedure and techniques. Abstracts of the papers follow in this issue of MT.

The Association for Machine Translation and Computational Linguistics was formed about a year ago by a number of people interested in the problem of translating languages by machine. The interest of the Association covers a broader field, however, including the use of computers for language processing in general.

Report from Hungary

The first Hungarian "Conference on mathematical linguistics and mechanical translation" was held March 8-10, 1962, in Budapest. The conference was organized by the Institute of Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS), in collaboration with the Presidential Committee of Cybernetics and the Working Committee of General Linguistics, both of HAS. The first day was devoted to mathematical and statistical linguistics; the second, to mechanical translation and information retrieval; and the third, to a general discussion concerning plans, projects, publications, etc. The conference had a national character; no foreign guests participated, and all papers and discussions were in Hungarian. There were more than forty active participants in the discussions. The entire proceedings will be published in 1963 by HAS (Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest).

The colloquium "Foundations of mathematics, mathematical machines, and their applications," organized by the János Bolyai Mathematical Society and held in Tihany, September 11-15, 1962, had a section on "mathematical linguistics and machine translation." The proceedings of this colloquium will be published in 1963 by HAS (Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest) and by Gauthier-Villars (Paris).

Some of the principal Hungarian groups currently active in mechanical translation and mathematical linguistics are:

(1) Institute of Linguistics of HAS, Group for General and Structural Linguistics. Director: Prof. Zsigmond Telegdi. Recently founded group, engaged in research on transformational grammar of Hungarian.

(2) Computing Center of HAS. Director: Ferenc

Kiefer. In 1961, this group conducted the first experiments on an M-3 Hungarian-built computer. The group sponsors an MT seminar, organized in April, 1962. Meetings are held regularly every fortnight, and are attended by mathematicians and linguists of different institutions. The Center plans to form an official MT group in 1964. 3) Debrecen Group for Mathematical and Applied Linguistics. Director: Ferenc Papp. This group conducts statistical investigations of Hungarian and Russian texts. Also, they are investigating linguistic aids for foreign language teaching, and are doing preparatory work for Czech-Hungarian MT, and theoretical work on models. Papp holds a seminar in quantitative linguistics. The prospect is that this group will form an official liaison with HAS.

(4) Technical University of Budapest, Institute of Languages. Includes a group, headed by György Hell, working on Russian-Hungarian MT, and planning to work on English-Hungarian MT.

In addition, there are many persons, some of whom are not associated directly with the above-mentioned groups, who are working on related problems. There are plans to form shortly a working committee of HAS, for the purpose of theoretically co-ordinating all of the Hungarian work in MT and mathematical linguistics.

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