

8. Book Reviews

Machine translation: Theoretical and methodological issues
Sergei Nirenburg, 1987, 350 pages, Cambridge University Press
£30.00

As with any set of proceedings, you have to contend with a mixture of styles and levels of presentation. Most of this particular collection of 17 papers were presented at the Conference on Theoretical and Methodological Issues in Machine Translation at Colgate University in August 1985, with some additions to define a context. The additional papers are of a more expository nature; the conference papers proper, more narrowly technical.

A brief review cannot even list all of the items, but I would particularly like to single out the paper by Victor Raskin, which clearly differentiates between theoretical linguistics on the one hand, and what is really required of MT systems on the other. It should be required reading for all those involved in their design and implementation. It is unfortunate that the Eurotra project, which is going to be so important in the future on Machine Translation, is not so well explained.

This book is only for those with a strong interest in Machine Translation, and who can either borrow it from a library, or can justify £30.00 as reasonable sum to pay. It is not a justification I would support strongly.

Ian Kelly