Session 1 Operational MT Systems I
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MACHINE TRANSLATION IN EVERYDAY USE

The year 2000 is very near. But before the turn of century, the biggest conquest of Man, machine translation, will be fully launched.

Europe possesses 72 language pairs and with the common economic market of 1992, for the first time, a community of millions of people will have to manage with 72 different language pairs in a computer era.

In the present modern world, where everyone is in contact through a worldwide communication network, a system able to translate texts of several pages in a few seconds has become an absolute necessity!

Mr TOMA whom you all know, who discovered and developed SYSTRAN and who believed in machine translation even at the time the United States were doubtful of the possibilities of a translation process supported by computer, developed SYSTRAN with conviction and perseverance.

He was also the one who showed and explained to the Japanese industrial groups, which stay with us today, the way to machine translation thanks to a two-day symposium organized by Mr KAWASAKI.

We GACHOT took over in 1985 the SYSTRAN system and developed it to make it accessible to people in the whole world for telecommunication through the satellite network.

Today, any information coming from any part of the world in a source language can be sent in different countries and automatically translated in a few seconds in many languages.

This is exactly the aim which has been fixed for machine translation : to make a dialogue between multinationals possible.

A Service-Centre in France is already using SYSTRAN at the present time. This Centre is accessible to the whole world, even through Minitel.

Especially for the French industry and translators, we developed a system which, thanks to a coupling of Minitel and a PC or a Mc Intosh, completes the work station with an integrated translator.

This coupling, called TGV, enables to receive on a PC in one minute the translation of a page of 22 lines of 80 characters each
This system functions on the so-called KIOSK and the Service-Centre is paid by the post, at a price of presently about US$ 1,20 a page.

 Until now, here are the language pairs available :

          - English/French
          - French/English
          - German/English

 In the next weeks, the following pairs will also be available:

          - English/Arabic
          - English/Italian
          - English/Spanish
          - French/Arabic
          - French/Italian

Unfortunately, not all the 72 European language pairs are represented up to now. But this should be the case in the next 3 years.

The advantage of this system is that it uses transmission JCLs of Minitel. The latter enable to be connected and to get even quicker the transfer of texts.

MINITEL has another advantage : it is also used as modem with a speed in each direction of 1,200 bauds, 2 screens are used at the same time : one - the Minitel - with the source-text and the other - the PC - with the target-text.
In this way, potential corrections are easy to operate.

If it needs to be correct at 100 %, machine translation, like human translation, requires the help of revisers.

We see a good future for translators because they will be promoted revisers.