

Machine Translation as a Way To Make Life Easier

Introduction

Nowadays, people all around the world collaborate with each other more actively and closer than ever before in social cultural, economical environmental and political spheres through different means of communication. Moreover, ever-developing technologies push the boundaries between cultures, and the only thing that significantly complicates the process of cultural rapprochement is language. For most people it is hardly possible to acquire the knowledge of several foreign languages while knowledge of two or three languages does not suffice now. Under such condition, using the machine translation (MT) can be treated as a possible way out. In the Information Age that is the Translation Age, new ways of talking and thinking about translation which take full account of the dramatic changes in the digital sphere are urgently required [1].

MT is often taken skeptically for a number of disadvantages, such as lack of superior exactness and inferior translation quality of the texts with ambiguous words and sentences. It is obviously that machine translation quality is imperfect and it may never be perfect in our lifetime; but it is continuously improving. The purpose of this paper is to estimate the benefits of MT and consider the question why MT is demanded regardless of apparent drawbacks.

Machine Translation and Its Advantages

Machine Translation (MT) is an automated system that analyzes text from Source Language (SL) and Produces “equivalent” text in Target Language (TL), ideally without human intervention. MT is an area of applied research that draws ideas and techniques from computer science, Artificial Intelligence (AI), translation theory, and statistics. Every machine translation system requires programs for translation and automated dictionaries and grammars to support translation [2].

Machine translation is a tool designed to speed up the rate that documents can be translated, as well as bring down overall costs. It is surely successful in doing these tasks. For example, one of the advantages is that the translation is done faster helping understanding the content of original text. The most popular of the MT are SYSTRAN, Ball Software FB-Active Translator, Google Translate, Similis, SDL Enterprise Translation Server.

Machine Translation can provide a quicker translation of large texts, thus saving company’s time and capitals. For example companies in the international business fields often encounter cultural differences and when dealing businesses oversea, legal documents may require translation and machine translation can quickly translate the text without time delay or the hassle of hiring a translator [3].

Not only is machine translation time-saving but also cost-saving too. Due to the popularity of the translation, lots of translation programs can be purchase off the shelf, making it affordable to majority. Also hiring a professional translator may be expensive since they can charge by hours or by each page of translated text. When often we just need the general idea of the text, therefore MT can be effective in this area. This is suitable in the working environment, when employees want to translate a memo or an email, to get the general concept of the message [3].

Although human translators are a reliable source for translating texts, often people who want to translate a private email or a personal financial documents, the issue of confidentiality can arise. Since it is hard for some to entrust their private information in a stranger, therefore, a machine translator will be suitable in this sensitive area.

Often professional translator is limited to the number of languages he/she can specialized in, but a machine translator can specialized in a variety of languages, as long as it is program into the

machine; and often machine translation can be customize to suit the context of the field. Therefore, companies who deal formal business documents with more than one culturally different country, a machine translator would be helpful and save the company the hassle of hiring one professional translator for each culturally different country.

However it is still important to keep in mind that although machine translators have the potential to replace human translators; in order to reassure the quality of the translated text/speech, it is required to use a combined effort of a machine and a human translator; this is known as a semi-automatic translation process. However, with further investment in MT, there is the possibility of human translators being replaced completely by artificial technologies, allowing the process to operate on a fully automatic level [4].

Conclusion

Despite the fact that the MP system remains imperfect, and there are a number of obvious problems, but the machine translation still maintains some advantages. Firstly, machine translation is much faster than human translation. Secondly, machine translation uses a much larger quantity of vocabulary than human translation. Although post-editing is still needed by translators, they need only adjust some words or grammar according to the ready-made target texts from machine translation. This will greatly improve the speed and efficiency of translators. As a result, undoubtedly, human translation should be integrated with machine translation to correct deficiencies.

References

1. EM. Cronin. Translation in the Digital Age, Routledge, 2013. 176 p
2. Neha Gupta. Machine Translation // Presentation of TECH IT. URL: <http://www.authorstream.com/Presentation/shalinigupta0301-1374536-machine-translation/%202>.
3. Machine Translation. Advantages of machine translation. URL: http://machinetranslationcomm301.blogspot.ru/2009_04_01_archive.html.
4. Machine Translation. Potential Replacement. URL: <http://machinetranslationcomm301.blogspot.ru/2009/04/potential-replacement.html>.

Scientific Adviser: N.V. Kourkan, Language Instructor, TPU, Russia