

The emergence of FAUT

Fully Automatic Useful Translation

— Invited Keynote —

Jaap van der Meer

Despite more than fifty years of machine translation research, the technology has found a relative low adoption rate in the business world. In his presentation Jaap van der Meer shares his perspectives on the evolution from the early attempts of MT researchers to produce FAHQT (Fully Automatic High Quality Translation) to what he calls now FAUT (Fully Automatic Useful Translation). The market is opening up to automatic translation for whole new reasons.

The predominant culture in the translation industry has been one of creativity and craftsmanship. Cultures are hard to change, especially when they go back a long time in history. However, this time market forces are too strong to be resisted by cultural barriers. Information is extremely fluid these days and publishing is becoming everybody's business. The translation industry will change, and change drastically this time. Companies and institutions are increasingly confronted by the localization dilemma: what to translate and what not to translate? The information pyramid keeps growing and the number of required languages is expanding. At the same time the paternalistic publisher-centric model is giving way to a user-centric model. The user is taking control by surfing the Internet and retrieving the information they need, when they need it.

Everything is playing along to make machine translation technology successful this time. Computer power is nearly endless and new technological approaches allow us to use massive text corpora to train machine translation systems. While academics are still debating what the best approach ultimately will be to generate FAHQT, the users start to realize that a mix of whatever translation technologies are available today already produce FAUT.

This presentation will highlight:

- evolution of the translation market
- different approaches to machine translation
- the user-centric publishing model
- the future of syndication of linguistic resources
- user cases

Jaap van der Meer (Founder and Director of TAUS: the Translation Automation User Society) is a language industry pioneer and visionary, who started his first translation company in The Netherlands in 1980. In 1987 his company INK published the first desktop term extraction and translation memory software. He inspired and funded the founding meetings of the LISA organization for the localization industry and he was co-founder of the SAE TopTec Multilingual Communications Conference for the automotive industry. He was president and CEO of ALPNET. He is also cofounder and partner of Cross Language n.v., a consultancy and systems integration company specialized in language technology. Jaap van der Meer is a member of the Localization World management team, a regular speaker at conferences and author of many articles about technologies and translation and globalization trends.