

IN-MIGRA2-CM

Why the Third Social Sector does Matter to MT

Celia Rico

Facultad de Comunicación

Universidad Europea

C/ Tajo, s/n, 28670 Villaviciosa de Odón, Madrid

celia.rico@universidadeuropea.es

Abstract

Now that MT is increasingly used in multilingual contexts, contributing, from a market perspective, for speeding up processes, reducing costs and improving quality, it is interesting to note how the multilingual demands of the third social sector seem to have fallen into oblivion as far as this technology is concerned. In this regard, IM-MIGRA2-CM, as an interdisciplinary project, seeks, among other objectives, to cater for the multilingual needs of stakeholders working in not-for-profit contexts. One such need is the implementation of a customized MT engine following the trail of much more profitable sectors (automotive, travel or engineering, to name but a few).

1 Description

The third sector is a pillar that helps to build bridges between the state and the civil society by detecting social needs, providing a response, and developing frameworks for social participation, with high dependence on public funding and a workforce based on volunteer work. This compels actors involved to find new ways to respond to the demands of the millions of people at risk of poverty or other forms of social exclusion.

In this context, translation usually plays a key role, nonetheless usually carried out by voluntary contributions from professional translators who, altruistically, use their own resources to perform the job. In this scenario, work conducted in the area of translation technology in IN-MIGRA2-

CM concentrates in the implementation of MT as a means to help facilitate the work of the volunteer translator.

IN-MIGRA2-CM is as an interdisciplinary project that aims at carrying out a needs analysis of the third social sector, and more specifically, of migrant population in Spain, from different, yet complementary, perspectives: discourse analysis, language learning, sociolinguistics, and translation technology. The project is lead by Universidad de Alcalá de Henares and the consortium includes four research teams at Universidad Europea and Universidad Nebrija. The contribution from the team at Universidad Europea in the area of machine translation evolves around three main questions:

- How good are generic MT engines for translation in the third sector domain?
- Is domain adaptation of MT engines feasible in third sector translation?
- Is out-of-domain data useful in this context?

The research framework considers different translation engines (both rule-based and statistical machine translation), and different sets of training data (parallel corpus for general purposes, proprietary translation memories, and sample translations) with the purpose of carrying out a series of user experiments and evaluation. IN-MIGRA2-CM is still at a preliminary stage of work (year 1): setting up the evaluation context and methodology. Full results will not be available until the project ends (year 3).

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