Abstracts of invited talks

Shaping research from user requirements, and other exotic things

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Despite its relative maturity, Machine Translation is an extremely active field, enjoying a highly inter-disciplinary community. This presentation will try to convey two very distinct perspectives: that of the engineer proposing MT tools to Language Service Providers (LSPs), and that of the Machine Learning researcher.

While sheer translation quality is crucial, several other requirements must be met in order to successfully deploy an MT system. The first part of this presentation will focus on some desiderata gathered from LSPs considering the option of deploying MT to support professional translators.

While statistical MT is now mainstream, the interaction between the Machine Learning (ML) community and the MT community remains limited. The second part of the talk will present some approaches proposed by pure-ML researchers when brought to applying their tools of the trade to Machine Translation.

Still looking for the proper place? A view on Machine Translation from a translation science perspective

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Round about three decades ago Martin Kay wrote his well-known paper *"The Proper Place of Men and Machines in Translation"*. Some ten years ago the paper, which until then had only been published as an internal report, had not lost its topicality, and so it was reprinted in a 1997 issue of the *"Machine Translation"* journal. Kay's major argument was that automating translation requires a modest and granular approach, starting with tools for machine-aided human translation and then, little by little, moving towards translation proper. Yet, since then several research projects have followed the opposite, much more ambitious line which, unfortunately, was much more promising with respect to the acquisition of research funds, so that until recently most of the tools relevant to translation service providers have been developed by companies having hands-on know-how in the translation business, but little interest and experience in methods related to computational linguistics in general and to MT in particular.
Since the late 1970's machine translation has seen many ups and downs, a "paradigm shift" from rule-based to statistical approaches, a transformation from a rather exclusive and expensive technology that only few can afford to a piece of software that is available in computer shops, bookshops, and department stores or even accessible at your fingertips via the Internet. Like a city map the "MT roadmap" seems to contain dead-end streets and road works but also highways and sign posts. The presentation will take a look at both promising and less promising pathways from a translation-oriented viewpoint that is based on an action-theoretical approach in the tradition of Justa Holz-Mänttäri and other scholars.