

MT Evaluation Attracts Speakers and Participants from Around the World

by Muriel Vasconcellos

ATA members can come early to San Diego and avail themselves of an exciting program on the evaluation of machine translation. The **MT Evaluation Workshop**, to be held at the San Diego Princess Resort on November 2 and 3 (9:00-5:00 each day), will bring together reports on the latest scientific evaluations being conducted in the Americas, Europe, and Japan. The Workshop will provide a forum for open discussion and even, for those who register in advance, hands-on participation.

Starting with a tip of the hat to "Traditions in the Evaluation of MT," the program will move on quickly to "Current Perspectives" and "New Directions." Summaries of work under way in Europe (Kirsten Falkedal and Margaret King), Japan (Hirosato Nomura), and the United States (John White and others) will be intermixed with thought pieces on theoretical issues in evaluation (Gudrun Magnusdottir), ideas for new methodologies (Henry Thompson), and fresh approaches to benchmarking (Adriane Rinsche). The Workshop will also address the evaluation of related natural language processing applications such as data extraction and message understanding (Lynn Carlson, Rita Doerr, and Beth Sundheim)—and yes, there will even be a report on tests of machine-aided voice translation (Christine Montgomery).

The second day will focus on practical experiences. In addition to discussions on "Criteria for the Evaluation of MT Systems" and "Assessing the Labor-Intensive Elements of MT," there will be reports on evaluations of specific language combinations as well as presentations by developers on their own internal systems for monitoring improvement of their products. And probably a first of its kind, a contribution by Craig Will and Boyan Onysh-

kevych will address the problem of "Evaluating the Evaluators."

Early Workshop registrants will receive a packet in the mail about two weeks in advance which will include lists of criteria for the evaluation of MT systems (to start them thinking) and some raw MT output for them to critique themselves. Their "homework" will be collected at the outset, and a combined report of what they found and chose to correct will be presented by Marjorie León at the end of the Workshop.

To find out if it's still possible to register, send a fax to "MT Evaluation Workshop" (202/667-8808 or 410/730-4973).

See separate article, "San Diego Countdown," elsewhere in this issue, for information on the MT Showcase running in tandem with the Evaluation Workshop.)