

MT. Statistical methods reemerge^{55d} as a result. It was first suggested by Warren Weaver in 1949. However, efforts in that direction were soon abandoned due to the limitation of computational capabilities. The recent availability of bilingual, machine-readable texts has stimulated interest in methods for extracting linguistically valuable information from such texts. The initial proposal of using statistical approach in MT was by Brown et al., (1993) who suggested a statistical approach to MT from English into French.

2.6. Statistical Approach to MT

Due to the above mentioned difficulties, linguists started to think of empiricist approaches rather than rationalist ones. Most linguistics and especially natural language processing were completely dominated by a rationalist approach. An empiricist approach to NLP suggests that “we can learn the complicated and extensive structure of language by specifying an appropriate general language model, and then inducing the values of parameters by applying statistical, pattern recognition, and machine learning methods to large amount of language use” (Manning & Shutze, 2002:5). In this respect, Arnold (2003:138) sees that “translation is a very complex process involving many factors, the appeal of some kind of statistical methodology should be clear.”

Unlike traditional approaches which draw on observing a large amount of language use situated within its context in the world, statistical NLP uses texts, and regards the textual context. A body of text is called corpus (a Latin word which means body) and corpora for a multiple collections of texts.

Other researchers distinguish between statistical and traditional approaches by referring to rule-based MT systems versus data-driven systems (Bennet & Gerber, 2003). The former systems are created manually by linguists who write