

A Research in the Language Services of the United Nations from a Digital Technology Perspective: A Case Study of the DGACM

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Abstract: The study examines the language services of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM) within the United Nations (UN) framework via IT, focusing on tech's role in boosting translation, sharing and preserving language diversity. DGACM has enhanced efficiency by incorporating contemporary technological means, such as artificial intelligence, machine translation, and natural language processing. During the pandemic, it adopted innovative measures to ensure language service continuity, demonstrating flexibility in responding to emergencies. It acknowledges traditional limitations and highlights DGACM's success in automating and enhancing services while maintaining cultural diversity, which offers insights for optimizing language services of international organizations assisted by the IT tech. Furthermore, insights into DGACM's language services for international organizations emphasize establishing a multilingual equality perspective, optimizing resource allocation, and enhancing service adaptability amid technological innovation. The study suggests international organizations protect minority languages, embrace remote interpretation systems, and integrate technology with human resources to preserve service quality.

Keywords: Language services, Information technology, DGACM

1. Introduction

The Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM), a vital UN Secretariat dept., ensures decision-making bodies' operations and provides UNGA with comprehensive language services [1-2]. Reflecting UN's multilingual commitment, its services promote diversity and cooperation [3]. Under today's information technology environment, the essence of language service is undergoing transformations. IT drives language service transformations, enhancing efficiency, sharing and preserving diversity. Cloud computing fosters "cloud translation," integrating services, KBs, translators and suppliers for holistic solutions. Remote interpreting breaks geo barriers, enabling global real-time oral conversion. Speech recognition and synthesis advancements enhance machines' speech capture/conversion, aiding interpreters and boosting translation accuracy and efficiency.

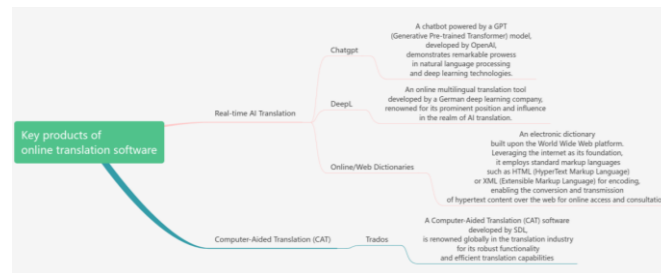


Figure 1: Key products of online translation software

Moreover, today's information technology also demands that language service professionals proficiently apply information technology tools such as machine translation assistance and localization software to enhance work efficiency and translation quality. Furthermore, cross-cultural communication abilities have been elevated to an unprecedented level, requiring practitioners to be acutely aware of cultural nuances to ensure the appropriateness of transmission. Thus, This study examines how the UN utilizes IT to optimize language services, address global diversity challenges and improve global language governance.

2. Language Services of the DGACM

2.1. Translation Service

The six translation services of the DGACM are responsible for producing parliamentary documentation in the six official languages of the United Nations with, which are dedicated sections for each official language and ensuring quality translations [4]. It integrates automated tools and AI to boost efficiency, allowing translators to focus on nuanced linguistic nuances and cultural contexts. For minority languages, it adopts innovative measures like special funds, big data and ML to enhance translation quality, ensuring equitable global communication. The translation service focuses on tech innovations and translator development [5]. Regular training, seminars, online resources, a global expert network boost translators' minority language culture comprehension, IT proficiency, and cross-cultural competence. This approach ensures agility amidst tech shifts while preserving linguistic diversity.

2.2. Interpretation Service

The interpretation service upholds traditional forms while integrating tech to enhance UN conferences' language services. This pursues efficiency, quality, linguistic diversity and barrier-free communication. Dedicated teams ensure linguistic accuracy and facilitate tech applications. The service's blend of tech innovation and talent sets a global benchmark for language services [6]. The interpretation service invests in cutting-edge tech for simultaneous interpretation, focusing on minority languages. Customized systems reduce interpreters' burden, ensuring quality unbiased by usage frequency or resources. This tech parity shows respect for linguistic diversity and UN's commitment to global linguistic ecology. The Interpretation Service fosters minority language interpreters' growth through training, resource support and cross-cultural exchanges. It builds an inclusive community enabling interpreters to excel in their domains.

2.3. Core Translation Process

A. Task Reception

This stage involves receiving docs for translation from Secretariat meetings, committees and departments. DGACM has a dedicated reception window with an EMS for swift task entry and

categorization, ensuring accuracy and timeliness. Clear timelines ensure prompt processing before meetings.

B. Task Allocation

DGACM allocates tasks to translation/interpretation sections based on language needs, urgency and difficulty, using a smart mechanism that considers translator expertise, workload and more. An emergency response system ensures prompt handling of urgent tasks.

C. Translation Work

Translation work involves doc translation, verbatim reporting and editing. Oral interpretation covers simultaneous and consecutive, ensuring real-time meeting communication. Interpreters follow strict standards for accuracy and fluency. DGACM promotes multilingual skills and organizes training to enhance interpreters' professionalism and capabilities.

D. Delivery

The DGACM oversees written translation, ensuring timely translation, proofreading, typesetting, and distribution of official documents to member state delegations. For interpretation, it guarantees seamless simultaneous interpretation equipment operation, timely interpreter availability, and high-quality service. Additionally, it organizes and archives vital materials like meeting minutes and speeches for future reference (See Fig.2).

The DGACM's cohesive internal language services facilitate seamless international exchanges. Anticipating tech advancements and rising service demands, it will optimize processes, elevate quality and efficiency, further bolstering its contribution to global governance.

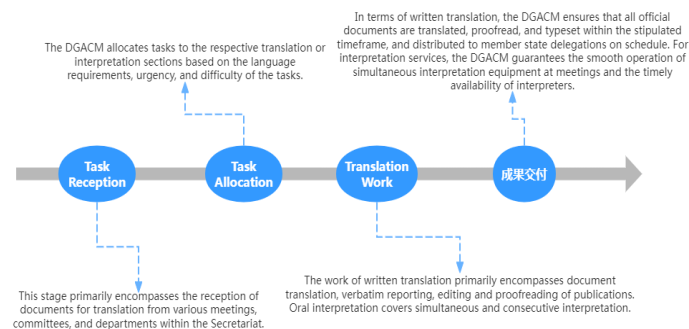


Figure 2: Core process of translation for DGACM

2.4. Application of Technologies and Tools

In the IT era, tech innovations empower internal services, enhancing quality and reducing costs. As tech advances, language services will become more intelligent, personalized and efficient, fostering global exchange [7]. DGACM's Global Tech Group develops projects like gText, gDoc, gMeets, boosting automation and supporting professionals for efficiency. The DGACM developed gText, leveraging AI and NLP with AKN4UN, boosting UN doc processing. gMeets manages meetings, streamlining conference activities [8]. AI advancements will enable personalized translation, natural speech recognition/synthesis. Future tools will integrate seamlessly, enhancing internal service efficiency. Though tech evolves, language professionals remain crucial, leveraging tech for simultaneous interpretation, accessing online glossaries, databases in all UN languages.

3. Characteristics of Language Services Provided by the DGACM

3.1. Multilingual Equality and Inclusiveness

A. Principle of Language Equality

DGACM's commitment to Kurdish, a historically significant yet under-recognized ME language, underscores its global responsibility. Leveraging IT, it offers UN info access to Kurdish users, fostering international engagement. This embodies linguistic ecology, rights, and diversity's importance in globalization [9]. It demonstrates IT's potential in promoting linguistic equality and enhancing international communication while respecting diversity. DGACM leverages IT to serve minority languages precisely and efficiently. It uses big data and machine learning to refine translation, ensuring accuracy and fluency. Online platforms facilitate partnerships between linguists and minority communities, preserving cultural heritage. Additionally, multimodal communication like video interpretation and VR conferences provide intuitive experiences for diverse linguistic delegates [10].

B. Inclusive Policies

DGACM's language policy emphasizes inclusivity, reflecting UN's commitment to global diversity and cooperation. It bridges nations, organizations, and individuals through tailored services, enhancing information exchange and understanding. This policy enhances UN agency diversity, respecting and preserving Member States' unique cultural, historical, and linguistic backgrounds [11]. It transforms the UN into a global dialogue platform, fostering cross-civilizational consensus and action. Crucially, DGACM's inclusive language policy catalyzes global cooperation. In our interconnected world, nations are interdependent, prioritizing cooperation and mutual benefit [12]. DGACM's inclusive language policy embodies cultural sensitivity and global vision, emphasizing cultural values and societal nuances beyond mere translations.

3.2. Efficiency and Flexibility

A. Emphasis on Technological Innovation and Application

DGACM has notably enhanced the efficiency of language services by actively incorporating contemporary technological means. These technological innovations assist DGACM in addressing the challenges of rapidly evolving language service demands. The application of automated translation tools has significantly boosted the efficiency of language services. Leveraging big data analytics capabilities, these tools can swiftly translate vast amounts of text, with quality increasingly approaching that of human translation. By integrating these tools, DGACM is able to promptly address urgent demands for conference and document translation. Remote interpretation systems introduce unparalleled flexibility, letting interpreters work remotely, offering real-time services via HD video/audio. This cuts travel expenses, scales effortlessly to fit conference sizes, and adapts to diverse needs.

B. Responding Flexibly to Emergencies

In today's globalized world, international affairs have become increasingly complex. During the pandemic, the DGACM promptly recognized the challenges faced by the traditional face-to-face meeting model and decisively adopted a series of innovative measures to ensure the continuity of language services. Firstly, the DGACM leveraged advanced remote conferencing technologies, such as Zoom and Teams, to enable remote simultaneous and consecutive interpretation services. These technologies not only broke geographical barriers, allowing delegates from all over the world to access translation services in real-time, but also ensured the accuracy and fluency of translations by optimizing network connections and audio quality. The DGACM redesigned and optimized language service processes in the context of remote conferences. For instance, by introducing automation tools and intelligent systems such as gDoc and eLUNa, rapid response and efficient translation of documents were achieved. These systems not only facilitated swift conversion and editing of multilingual documents but also improved translation accuracy and efficiency through machine learning algorithms.

3.3. Rigorous Monitoring of Service Quality

A. Emphasis on Professional Talent Training

DGACM ensures the competency of language service personnel is in line with international standards through a series of training programs. These programs emphasize a profound understanding of specialized domain knowledge. For instance, language service personnel undergo specialized training to ensure the consistency of the specialized terminology and professional vocabulary across various contexts. Addressing the shortage of skilled translators, DGACM initiated a university partnership program in 2007, which has since signed memoranda of cooperation with 19 universities worldwide. It has not only nurtured high-quality language service talent into the UN, but enhanced competitiveness of trainees through intensive training. Additionally, DGACM has established an internal promotion mechanism that encourages professional development among its staff. This talent-centric development strategy sets an exemplary precedent for the global language service industry. In future endeavors, DGACM should continue to elevate training quality, contributing greater wisdom to the advancement of the global language service.

B. Continuous Improvement of Quality Monitoring System

DGACM places great emphasis on user feedback, treating it as a crucial basis for improving language services. By establishing an effective feedback mechanism, DGACM promptly gathers insights into user satisfaction and suggestions for improvement across dimensions such as translation accuracy and timeliness. Leveraging these feedbacks, DGACM swiftly identifies service weaknesses and tailors remedial measures. DGACM actively employs new technologies, including artificial intelligence, machine translation, and natural language processing, to continuously explore their potential applications in language services. By integrating these advanced technologies, DGACM has not only boosted translation efficiency but also enhanced translation accuracy and consistency. Additionally, DGACM prioritizes the integration of technological innovation with human intelligence, ensuring that technological tools enhance efficiency without compromising the professionalism and quality of translations.

4. Insights of DGACM Language Services for International Organizations

4.1. Establishing a Multilingual Equality Perspective and Promoting Linguistic Diversity

International organizations should protect minority languages. This implies providing necessary support for users of minority languages in document translation, and daily communications [13]. By establishing special funds, training professional translators, and other measures, international organizations can ensure comprehensive information coverage and equitable communication. High-quality translation services must consider precise comprehension of the cultural nuances of minority languages. Translators should understand the cultural backgrounds, and historical contexts of these languages, ensuring that in the process of conversion, their cultural essences are preserved. This approach fosters cultural understanding among different communities. International organizations should advocate and practice the concept of “no language is superior or inferior, all cultures are valuable”. In decision-making processes, they should encourage and create opportunities for members who speak minority languages to fully express themselves, ensuring that their opinions and suggestions are treated and considered equitably.

4.2. Optimizing Language Service Resource Allocation and Enhancing Service Adaptability Amid Technological Innovation

A. Leveraging technological innovations

Organizations should leverage AI-driven auto translation tools for speed and accuracy gains. These tools swiftly process large text volumes, offering preliminary translations to expedite doc processing. Remote interpretation systems break geographical barriers, enabling real-time cross-border services [14]. Using HD video/audio, they ensure smooth communication, cutting travel costs and boosting conference access. International organizations should embrace these techs to adapt to remote conferences trends. Tech innovations face following challenges: AI translation's accuracy limited by language complexity and context; remote interpretation may suffer from latency and audio issues. International organizations must integrate tech and human resources to preserve language service quality and professionalism.

B. Enhancing Adaptability and Flexibility

In complex international affairs, organizations need advanced tech tools and a flexible emergency response mechanism. They must swiftly identify issues, assess impacts and mobilize resources to ensure continuous, high-quality language services. Advanced language processing tech and automation tools can boost efficiency and accuracy, supporting emergency response. GDoc system boosts global doc processing efficiency and mgmt, integrated with eLUNa, gMeets, and gData for automation. In emergencies, it supports translation and production. For urgent interp or translation, orgs swiftly deploy interpreters and MT tools to maintain service. Initiatives like NADI integrate data resources, enabling reuse and sharing for more comprehensive emergency response info support.

C. Establishing Comprehensive Quality Control and Talent Cultivation Systems

DGACM's quality control system embodies advanced concepts and practical experiences in modern language service management. This system not only focuses on innovation and application at the technical level but also emphasizes humanistic care and the enhancement of service consciousness. In the context of globalization, language services are no longer merely about textual translation but also involve the transmission of culture and values [15]. Therefore, establishing a comprehensive quality control system is not only necessary for improving the accuracy of language services but also a crucial way for international organizations to strengthen international communication, mutual trust, and global cooperation.

5. Conclusions

DGACM's language services are commendable for their comprehensiveness and foresight. It's set norms, standards, and a strong QC system. Emphasizes talent development, enhancing professionals' capabilities through training and career opportunities. Also, actively innovates, exploring new tech for language services, supporting UN's international communication. DGACM's language service practices offer insights for international organizations. They should: Embracing IT's pivotal role, adopting new tech to optimize service efficiency and quality; Prioritizing professional training for linguists, offering career growth and continuous learning; Establishing mechanisms for continuous improvement and innovation, adapting policies to user feedback, tech advances and international environment changes to stay competitive and adaptable.

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