

Bridge

Collaborative Translation of Social Media

Contrast the quietude of the physical world that I encountered on foot in the Hejaz desert with the buzzy digital conversation captured, analyzed, translated and culturally interpreted by our remarkable colleagues at Meedan

—PAUL SALOPEK, PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING JOURNALIST

Collaborative Translation for the Global Web Bridge is a web and mobile application designed to help communities of users translate, annotate, share and source the most compelling content on global social media. Starting with a pilot with the National Geographic Society and Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Paul Salopek's Out of Eden Walk project, Bridge aims to develop three major features:

- » **Augmented Translation** The core of Bridge enables rapid translation of social media and the addition of important cultural, social and political notes to facilitate understanding. Our Language Graph provides intelligent dictionary and glossary content and translation memories that augment translators' work.
- » **Crosslingual Engagement** Our critical metric of success is engagement across languages. All Bridge content is portable and shareable, with the aim of increasing the efficacy of multilingual users who want to help spread user generated content between linguistic, cultural and network divides.
- » **Advanced Reputation Model** Core to Bridge's success is a reputation model which tracks each user's success over time, enabling mixed competency groups to collaborate effectively and efficiently. The reputation and rating/reviewing system delivers translation quality metrics on all content generated within the app while encouraging participation from users with a variety of skill sets.

BACKGROUND

Since 2006, members of Meedan have been working to create a more crosslingual internet. These include Speak2Tweet, an effort to translate voice messages from the Egyptian revolution; Ai Weiwei English, a dedicated translation site for the Chinese artist-activist's Twitter; and Aikuma, an award-winning voice translation application for low-resource languages.

Bridge currently partners with the Oxford Internet Institute and the University of Kentucky to source social media posts and research our efficacy; with Translators Without Borders to pilot our platform; and with leading academics and journalists to advise on our efforts.

WHY WE ARE WORKING ON THIS?

As the next billion come online, language diversity on the web is projected to double in the next five years. With many social media sites, the potential to access content across languages is limited to low quality machine translations. Meanwhile, existing translation software has not adapted to the needs of social media translation, which requires flexibility with vernacular language and the ability to seed and share content across language divides. With a core goal of increasing crosslingual engagement, Bridge will help to make translation the Internet's newest embedded social gesture, alongside the familiar comment, favorite and share.