Modernizing historical Dutch: the UU system

Citation for published version (APA):

Document status and date:
Published: 01/02/2017

Document Version:
Publisher’s PDF, also known as Version of Record (includes final page, issue and volume numbers)

Please check the document version of this publication:
• A submitted manuscript is the version of the article upon submission and before peer-review. There can be important differences between the submitted version and the official published version of record. People interested in the research are advised to contact the author for the final version of the publication, or visit the DOI to the publisher's website.
• The final author version and the galley proof are versions of the publication after peer review.
• The final published version features the final layout of the paper including the volume, issue and page numbers.

Link to publication

General rights
Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

• Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
• You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
• You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal.

If the publication is distributed under the terms of Article 25fa of the Dutch Copyright Act, indicated by the “Taverne” license above, please follow below link for the End User Agreement:
www.tue.nl/taverne

Take down policy
If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us at:
openaccess@tue.nl
providing details and we will investigate your claim.

Download date: 05. Apr. 2020
Modernizing historical Dutch: the UU system
Marijn Schraagen, Feike Dietz, Marjo van Koppen, Kalliopi Zervanou
Utrecht University, The Netherlands

Summary

• Goal: modernize 17th century Dutch text to allow use of modern NLP resources and tools
• Method: combine expert rules, translation pairs from aligned parallel text, existing SMT frameworks
• Data: parallel translation of the Bible, 1637/1888
• Results: the proposed vocabulary-based method shows promising results on an in-domain test set, performance is impaired for unrelated domains
• Future work: refinement of current method, shift to character-based methods

Introduction

• Modernization of spelling and grammar allows use of tools for modern Dutch on historical text
• Note: some features (e.g., negative concord and case marking) are lost after modernization
• Quantitative methods can be trained using parallel text, e.g., diachronic translations of the Bible

Method

The Bible text is split into a training set (32235 sentences) and a test set (5000 sentences). The following steps are incrementally applied, with associated BLEU scores [1] on the test set (n = 4):

• (BLEU: 0.134) No translation.
• (0.507) Baseline: construct 1-to-1 translation lexicon on training data, using sentences of equal length.
• (0.530) Perform alignment to handle sentences of unequal length, extract additional translation pairs.
  ○ custom alignment algorithm using fixed anchor tokens
• (0.581) Compile a set of manual modernization rules.
  ○ e.g., strip case markers
• (0.600) Construct many-to-1 translation lexicon using aligned sentences.
• (0.619) Use POS-information for already modernized words to choose the right alternative for historical words.
  ○ haer + V → hen
  ○ haer + N → hun
• Selection for many-to-1 and POS rules: hill-climbing optimization on BLEU score on training data.
• (0.627) Compile rules to address punctuation differences between Bible translations.

Discussion and future work

• Vocabulary-based method not highly suitable for unrelated texts
• Diachronic differences: e.g., en translated as negation, but used in later texts only as conjunction
• Overtranslation, i.e., arguably correct results not present in the reference translation
  • ofte-of, der-van de, hare-hun, ’t-het, zo als-zaols, hebbe-heb, ...
• The current method can be refined for in-domain texts
• Character-based methods may offer wider applicability

References


Acknowledgements

This work is financed by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), grant 360-78-020.