

Human Language Technology: What Computers do with Text and Speech

Kevin Knight

Computer Science Department & Information Sciences Institute

University of Southern California

February 15, 2012

Anything machines do with text and speech

- Automatic translation of human languages
 - Question answering
 - Hands-free text and email
 - Device control
 - Analyzing online sentiment
 - Web search
- etc.

Hard for Computers!

olive oil



peanut oil



sesame oil



Hard for Computers!

olive oil



peanut oil



sesame oil



baby oil?



Hard for Computers!

olive oil



peanut oil



sesame oil



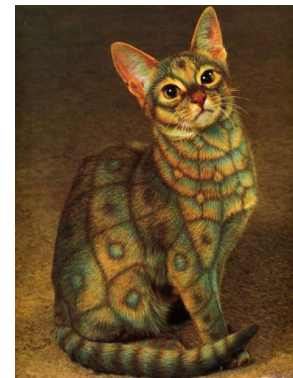
baby oil?



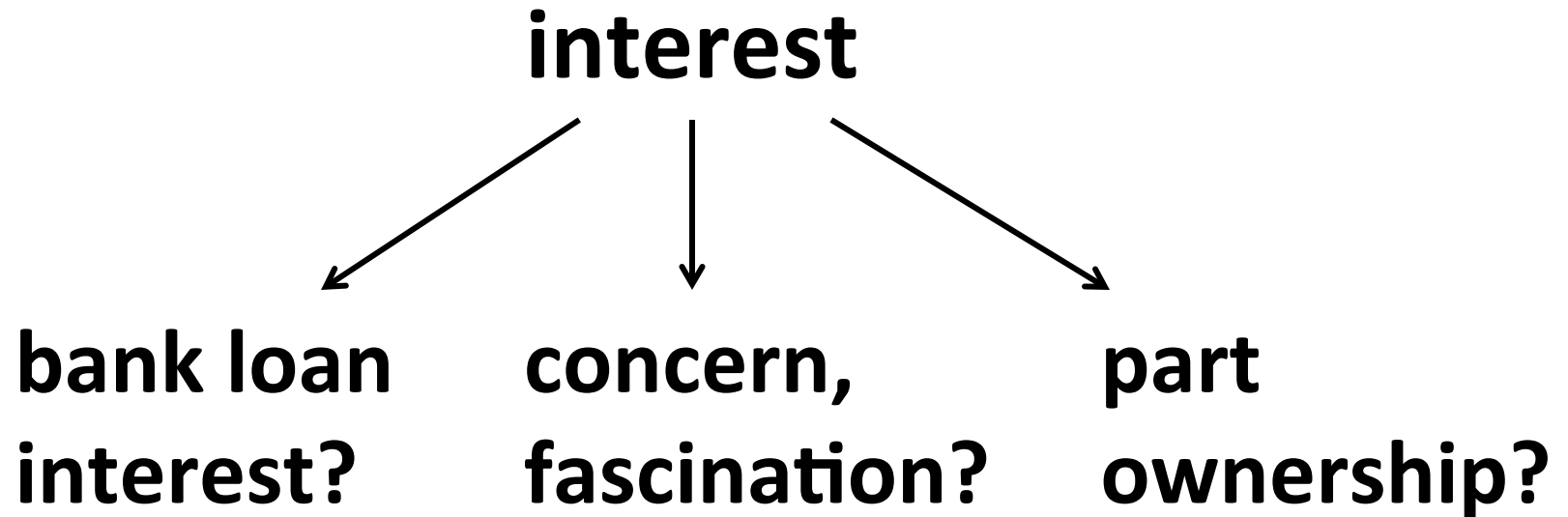
why
cats
paint

≠

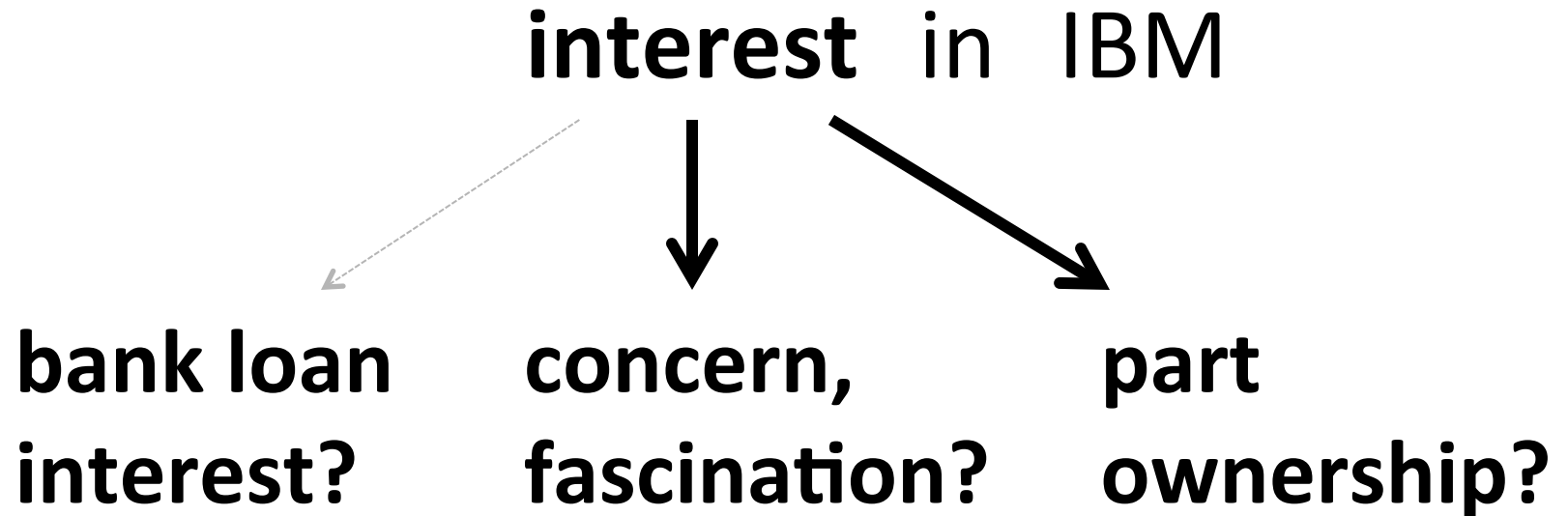
why
paint
cats



Hard for Computers!



Hard for Computers!



Hard for Computers!

a financial **interest** in IBM

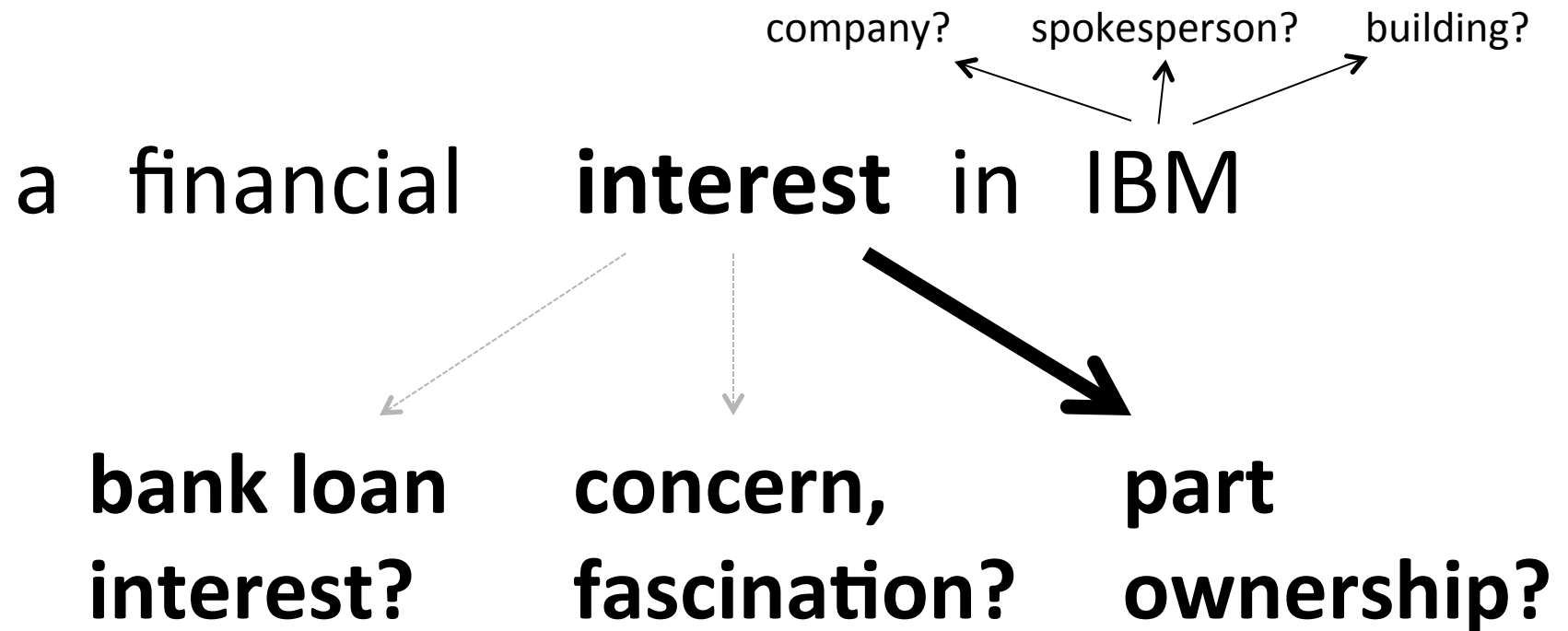
**bank loan
interest?**

**concern,
fascination?**

**part
ownership?**

Humans do this
effortlessly.

Hard for Computers!



Humans do this effortlessly.

Thousands of Languages

MANDARIN 885,000,000
SPANISH 332,000,000
ENGLISH 322,000,000
BENGALI 189,000,000

TURKISH 59,000,000
URDU 58,000,000
MIN NAN (China) 49,000,000
JINYU (China) 45,000,000

HINDI 182,000,000
PORTUGUESE 170,000,000
RUSSIAN 170,000,000
JAPANESE 125,000,000
GERMAN 98,000,000



GUJARATI 44,000,000
POLISH 44,000,000
ARABIC 42,500,000
UKRAINIAN 41,000,000

WU (China) 77,175,000
JAVANESE 75,500,800
KOREAN 75,000,000
FRENCH 72,000,000
VIETNAMESE 67,662,000

ITALIAN 37,000,000
XIANG (China) 36,015,000
MALAYALAM 34,022,000
HAKKA (China) 34,000,000

TELUGU 66,350,000
YUE (China) 66,000,000
MARATHI 64,783,000
TAMIL 63,075,000

KANNADA 33,663,000
ORIYA 31,000,000
PANJABI 30,000,000
SUNDA 27,000,000

Machine Translation

美国关岛国际机场及其办公室均接获一名自称沙地阿拉伯富商拉登等发出的电子邮件，威胁将会向机场等公众地方发动生化袭击後，关岛经保持高度戒备。



**Chinese/
English**



The U.S. island of Guam is maintaining a high state of alert after the Guam airport and its offices both received an e-mail from someone calling himself the Saudi Arabian Osama bin Laden and threatening a biological/chemical attack against public places such as the airport.

Kowane mutum na da hakkin ya sami yancin yin tunani da na sanin yakamata da na bin addini; saboda haka yana da yancin sake addini ko ra'ayin da ya bada gaskiya gare shi, da kuma yancin nuna addininsa ko ra'ayinsa, shi daya ko a cikin taro kuma a fili ko a boye ta hanyar koyarwa ko yin ibada, ko bauta wa abin da ya bada gaskiya gare shi da yin abubuwan da abin da yake bauta wa din ya nuna masa.



**Hausa/
English**



Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Grand Challenge for Artificial Intelligence

- Why have people gotten involved?
 - Passion for how human language works
 - When is a word sequence grammatical, sensible?
 - Interest in foreign languages
 - What's the difference between English and Chinese?
 - Desire to change the world
 - What happens when language barrier disappears?
- We spent a lot of time in the laboratory!

Today: End-User Products



...

US Government funded HLT research



SRI International

many
research +
institutions



IBM T. J. Watson

many
universities +



Columbia University

researchers,
faculty,
graduate students

...

+ US Government
funding of
computing
systems research



Tools for Companies



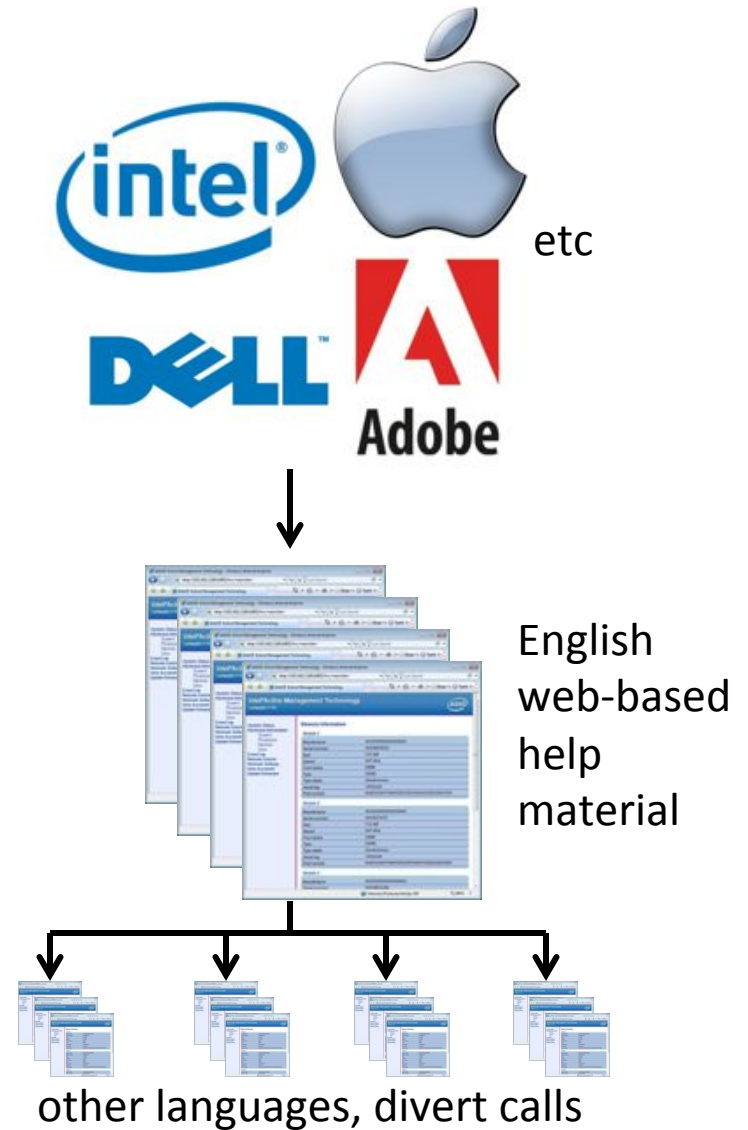
Tools for Companies



Tools for Companies



Tools for Companies



Tools for Military & Intelligence

Foreign news broadcast

Foreign speech recognition

English translation

Searchable archive

← US Government funded research
↓



What Has Been Working?

- Focus on **common** linguistic phenomena
 - rather than obscure, difficult cases
- Have machines **learn** from online text and speech data
- **Manage uncertainty** with probabilistic models
- **Evaluate** accuracy of systems
- Develop **common tasks**, compare notes
- **Refine** models

Learning from Data

I have an **interest** in gardening.

I earned 5% **interest** last year.

Zuckerberg holds a controlling **interest**.

My **interest** is purely out of curiosity.

Human annotation
of online text.

Learning from Data

concern,
fascination

bank loan
interest

part
ownership

I have an **interest** in gardening.

I earned 5% **interest** last year.

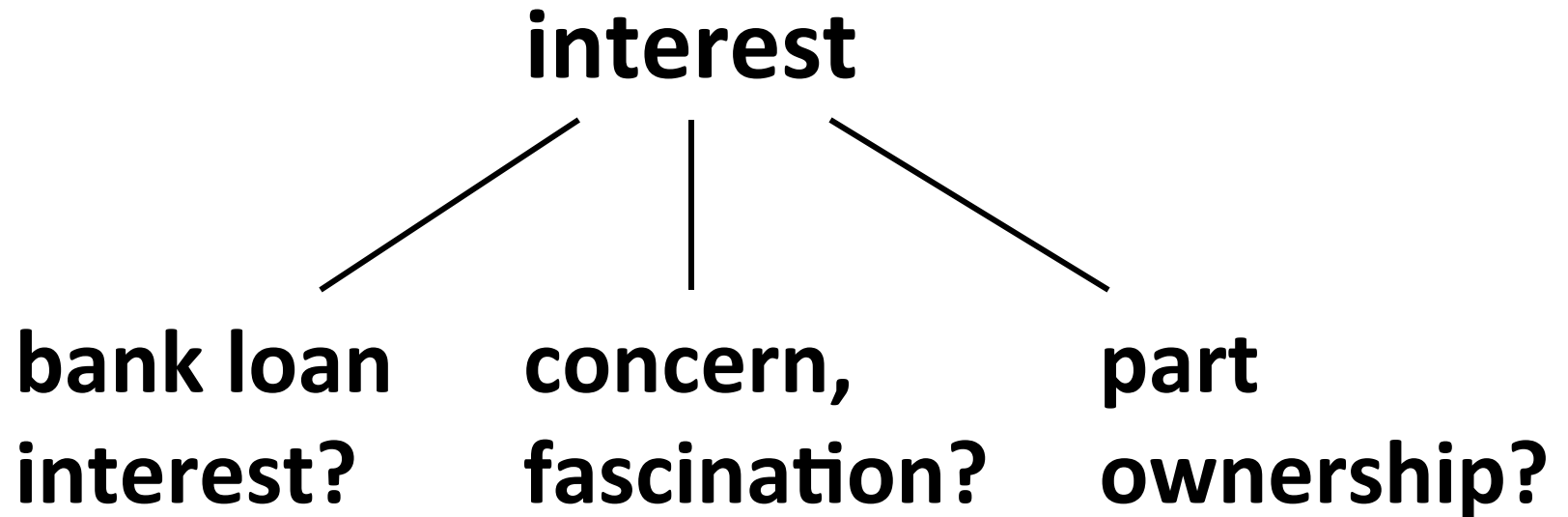
Zuckerberg holds a controlling **interest**.

My **interest** is purely out of curiosity.

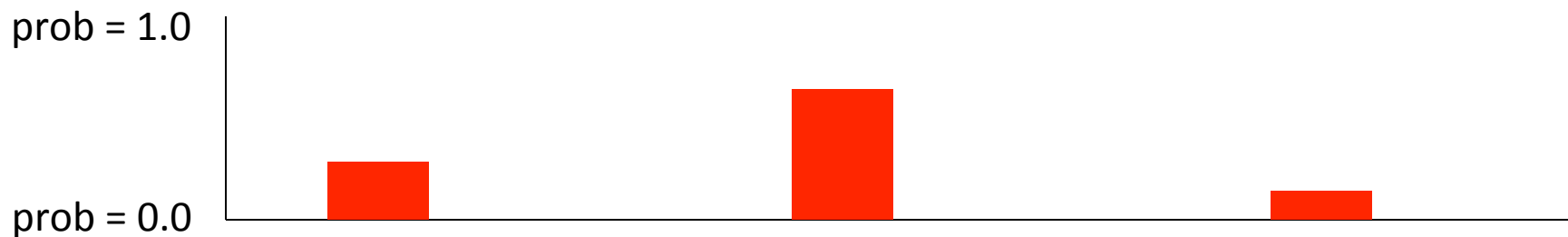
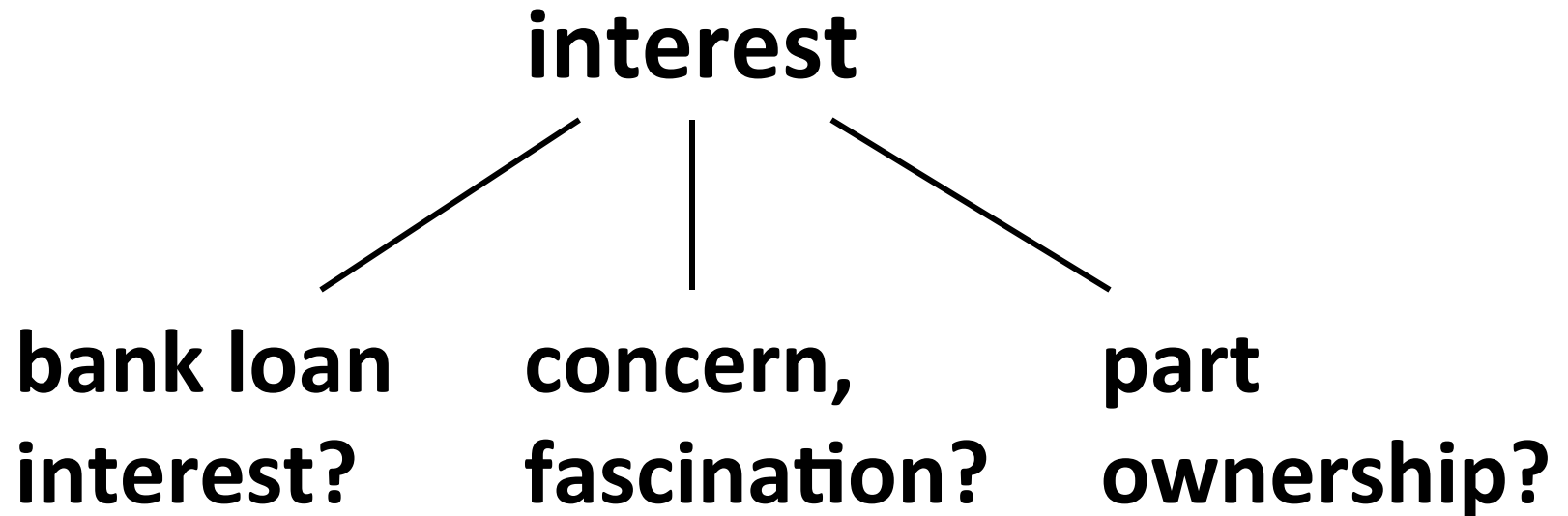
concern,
fascination

Human annotation
of online text.

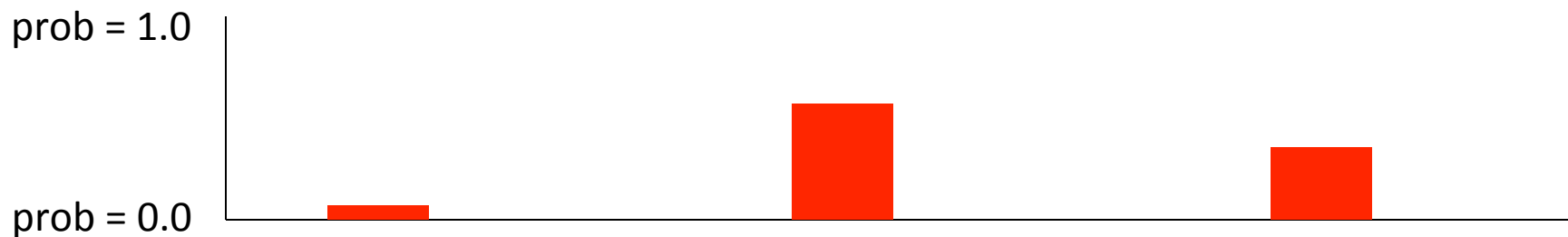
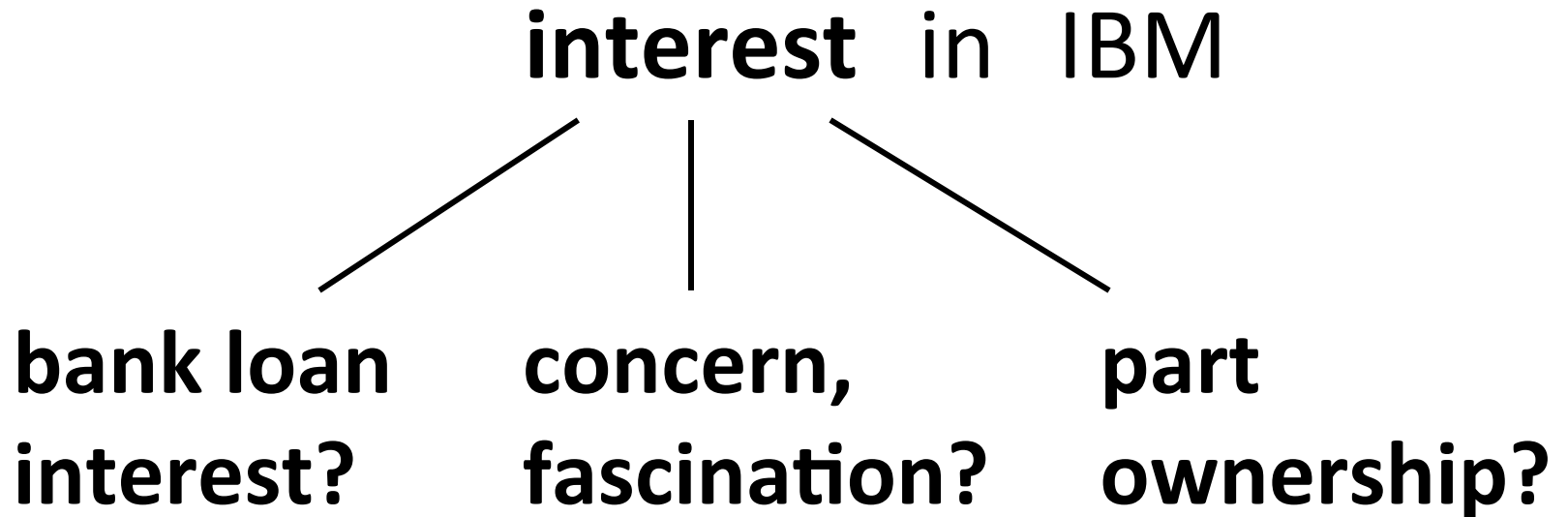
Learning from Data



Learning from Data



Learning from Data



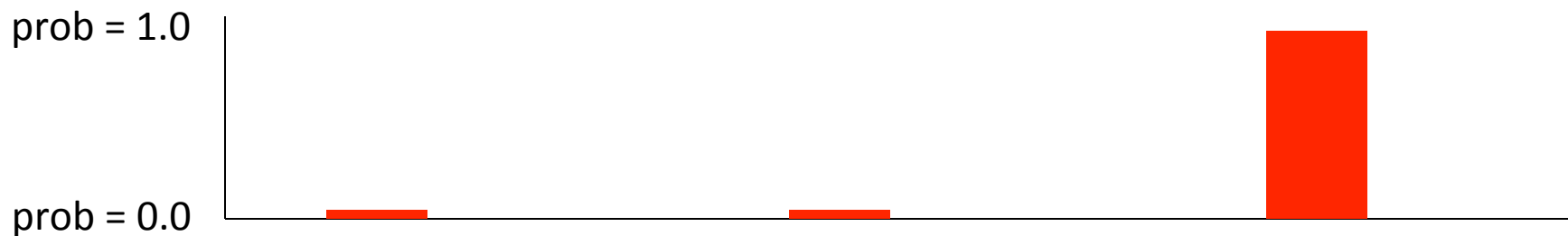
Learning from Data

a financial **interest** in IBM

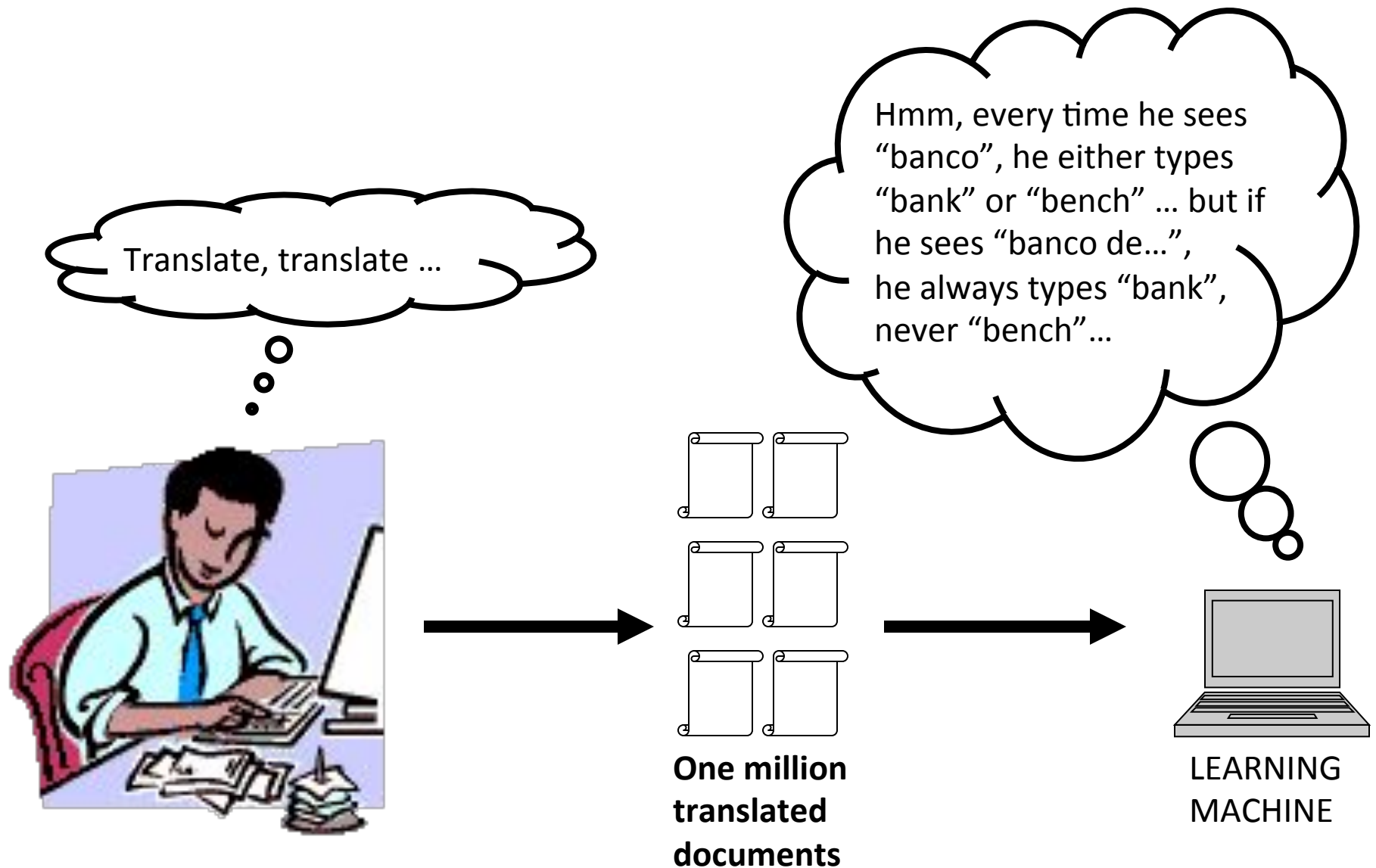
bank loan
interest?

concern,
fascination?

part
ownership?



Learning to Translate



Learning to Translate

12 English sentences translated manually into Spanish.

1a. Garcia and associates . 1b. Garcia y asociados .	7a. the clients and the associates are enemies . 7b. los clients y los asociados son enemigos .
2a. Carlos Garcia has three associates . 2b. Carlos Garcia tiene tres asociados .	8a. the company has three groups . 8b. la empresa tiene tres grupos .
3a. his associates are not strong . 3b. sus asociados no son fuertes .	9a. its groups are in Europe . 9b. sus grupos estan en Europa .
4a. Garcia has a company also . 4b. Garcia tambien tiene una empresa .	10a. the modern groups sell strong pharmaceuticals . 10b. los grupos modernos venden medicinas fuertes .
5a. its clients are angry . 5b. sus clientes estan enfadados .	11a. the groups do not sell zenzanine . 11b. los grupos no venden zanzanina .
6a. the associates are also angry . 6b. los asociados tambien estan enfadados .	12a. the small groups are not modern . 12b. los grupos pequenos no son modernos .

Learning to Translate

Your assignment, translate this: farok crrok hihok yorok klok kantok ok-yurp

1a. ok-voon ororok sprok .	7a. lalok farok ororok lalok sprok izok enemok .
1b. at-voon bichat dat .	7b. wat jjat bichat wat dat vat eneak .
2a. ok-drubel ok-voon anak plok sprok .	8a. lalok brok anak plok nok .
2b. at-drubel at-voon pippat rrat dat .	8b. iat lat pippat rrat nnat .
3a. erok sprok izok hihok ghrok .	9a. wiwok nok izok kantok ok-yurp .
3b. totat dat arrat vat hilat .	9b. totat nnat quat oloat at-yurp .
4a. ok-voon anak drok brok jok .	10a. lalok mok nok yorok ghrok klok .
4b. at-voon krat pippat sat lat .	10b. wat nnat gat mat bat hilat .
5a. wiwok farok izok stok .	11a. lalok nok crrok hihok yorok zanzanak .
5b. totat jjat quat cat .	11b. wat nnat arrat mat zanzanat .
6a. lalok sprok izok jok stok .	12a. lalok rarok nok izok hihok mok .
6b. wat dat krat quat cat .	12b. wat nnat forat arrat vat gat .

Learning to Translate

Your assignment, translate this: farok crrok hihok yorok klok kantok ok-yurp

1a. ok-voon ororok sprok .	7a. lalok farok ororok lalok sprok izok enemok .
1b. at-voon bichat dat .	7b. wat jjat bichat wat dat vat eneak .
2a. ok-drubel ok-voon anak plok sprok .	8a. lalok brok anak plok nok .
2b. at-drubel at-voon pippat rrat dat .	8b. iat lat pippat rrat nnat .
3a. erok sprok izok hihok ghrok .	9a. wiwok nok izok kantok ok-yurp .
3b. totat dat arrat vat hilat .	9b. totat nnat quat oloat at-yurp .
4a. ok-voon anak drok brok jok .	10a. lalok mok nok yorok ghrok klok .
4b. at-voon krat pippat sat lat .	10b. wat nnat gat mat bat hilat .
5a. wiwok farok izok stok .	11a. lalok nok crrok hihok yorok zanzanak .
5b. totat jjat quat cat .	11b. wat nnat arrat mat zanzanat .
6a. lalok sprok izok jok stok .	12a. lalok rarok nok izok hihok mok .
6b. wat dat krat quat cat .	12b. wat nnat forat arrat vat gat .

Learning to Translate

Your assignment, translate this: **farok** crrok hihok yorok klok kantok ok-yurp

1a. ok-voon ororok sprok .	7a. lalok farok ororok lalok sprok izok enemok .
1b. at-voon bichat dat .	7b. wat jjat bichat wat dat vat eneak .
2a. ok-drubel ok-voon anak plok sprok .	8a. lalok brok anak plok nok .
2b. at-drubel at-voon pippat rrat dat .	8b. iat lat pippat rrat nnat .
3a. erok sprok izok hihok ghrok .	9a. wiwok nok izok kantok ok-yurp .
3b. totat dat arrat vat hilat .	9b. totat nnat quat oloat at-yurp .
4a. ok-voon anak drok brok jok .	10a. lalok mok nok yorok ghrok klok .
4b. at-voon krat pippat sat lat .	10b. wat nnat gat mat bat hilat .
5a. wiwok farok izok stok .	11a. lalok nok crrok hihok yorok zanzanak .
5b. totat jjat quat cat .	11b. wat nnat arrat mat zanzanat .
6a. lalok sprok izok jok stok .	12a. lalok rarok nok izok hihok mok .
6b. wat dat krat quat cat .	12b. wat nnat forat arrat vat gat .

Learning to Translate

Your assignment, translate this: **farok** **crrok** hihok yorok klok kantok ok-yurp

1a. ok-voon ororok sprok .	7a. lalok farok ororok lalok sprok izok enemok . /
1b. at-voon bichat dat .	7b. wat jjat bichat wat dat vat eneak .
2a. ok-drubel ok-voon anak plok sprok .	8a. lalok brok anak plok nok .
2b. at-drubel at-voon pippat rrat dat .	8b. iat lat pippat rrat nnat .
3a. erok sprok izok hihok ghrok .	9a. wiwok nok izok kantok ok-yurp .
3b. totat dat arrat vat hilat .	9b. totat nnat quat oloat at-yurp .
4a. ok-voon anak drok brok jok .	10a. lalok mok nok yorok ghrok klok .
4b. at-voon krat pippat sat lat .	10b. wat nnat gat mat bat hilat .
5a. wiwok farok izok stok . /	11a. lalok nok crrok hihok yorok zanzanok . ???
5b. totat jjat quat cat .	11b. wat nnat arrat mat zanzanat .
6a. lalok sprok izok jok stok .	12a. lalok rarok nok izok hihok mok .
6b. wat dat krat quat cat .	12b. wat nnat forat arrat vat gat .

Learning to Translate

Your assignment, translate this: **farok** crrok **hihok** yorok klok kantok ok-yurp

1a. ok-voon ororok sprok .	7a. lalok farok ororok lalok sprok izok enemok .
1b. at-voon bichat dat .	7b. wat jjat bichat wat dat vat eneak .
2a. ok-drubel ok-voon anak plok sprok .	8a. lalok brok anak plok nok .
2b. at-drubel at-voon pippat rrat dat .	8b. iat lat pippat rrat nnat .
3a. erok sprok izok hihok ghrok .	9a. wiwok nok izok kantok ok-yurp .
3b. totat dat arrat vat hilat .	9b. totat nnat quat oloat at-yurp .
4a. ok-voon anak drok brok jok .	10a. lalok mok nok yorok ghrok klok .
4b. at-voon krat pippat sat lat .	10b. wat nnat gat mat bat hilat .
5a. wiwok farok izok stok .	11a. lalok nok crrok hihok yorok zanzanok .
5b. totat jjat quat cat .	11b. wat nnat arrat mat zanzanat .
6a. lalok sprok izok jok stok .	12a. lalok rarok nok izok hihok mok .
6b. wat dat krat quat cat .	12b. wat nnat forat arrat vat gat .

Learning to Translate

Your assignment, translate this: **farok** crrok **hihok** **yorok** klok kantok ok-yurp

1a. ok-voon ororok sprok .	7a. lalok farok ororok lalok sprok izok enemok . /
1b. at-voon bichat dat .	7b. wat jjat bichat wat dat vat eneat .
2a. ok-drubel ok-voon anak plok sprok .	8a. lalok brok anak plok nok .
2b. at-drubel at-voon pippat rrat dat .	8b. iat lat pippat rrat nnat .
3a. erok sprok izok hihok ghirok . /	9a. wiwok nok izok kantok ok-yurp .
3b. totat dat arrat vat hilat .	9b. totat nnat quat oloat at-yurp .
4a. ok-voon anak drok brok jok .	10a. lalok mok nok yorok ghirok klok .
4b. at-voon krat pippat sat lat .	10b. wat nnat gat mat bat hilat .
5a. wiwok farok izok stok . /	11a. lalok nok crrok hihok yorok zanzanok .
5b. totat jjat quat cat .	11b. wat nnat arrat mat zanzanat .
6a. lalok sprok izok jok stok .	12a. lalok rarok nok izok hihok mok . /
6b. wat dat krat quat cat .	12b. wat nnat forat arrat vat gat .

Learning to Translate

Your assignment, translate this: **farok** crrok **hihok** **yorok** **clok** kantok ok-yurp

1a. ok-voon ororok sprok .	7a. lalok farok ororok lalok sprok izok enemok . /
1b. at-voon bichat dat .	7b. wat jjat bichat wat dat vat eneak .
2a. ok-drubel ok-voon anak plok sprok .	8a. lalok brok anak plok nok .
2b. at-drubel at-voon pippat rrat dat .	8b. iat lat pippat rrat nnat .
3a. erok sprok izok hihok ghrok .	9a. wiwok nok izok kantok ok-yurp .
3b. totat dat arrat vat hilat .	9b. totat nnat quat oloat at-yurp .
4a. ok-voon anak drok brok jok .	10a. lalok mok nok yorok ghrok clok .
4b. at-voon krat pippat sat lat .	10b. wat nnat gat mat bat hilat .
5a. wiwok farok izok stok .	11a. lalok nok crrok hihok yorok zanzanak .
5b. totat jjat quat cat .	11b. wat nnat arrat mat zanzanat .
6a. lalok sprok izok jok stok .	12a. lalok rarok nok izok hihok mok .
6b. wat dat krat quat cat .	12b. wat nnat forat arrat vat gat .

Learning to Translate

Your assignment, translate this: **farok** crrok **hihok yorok** **clock** kantok ok-yurp

1a. ok-voon ororok sprok .	7a. lalok farok ororok lalok sprok izok enemok . /
1b. at-voon bichat dat .	7b. wat jjat bichat wat dat vat eneak .
2a. ok-drubel ok-voon anak plok sprok .	8a. lalok brok anak plok nok .
2b. at-drubel at-voon pippat rrat dat .	8b. iat lat pippat rrat nnat .
3a. erok sprok izok hihok ghrok .	9a. wiwok nok izok kantok ok-yurp .
3b. totat dat arrat vat hilat .	9b. totat nnat quat oloat at-yurp .
4a. ok-voon anak drok brok jok .	10a. lalok mok nok yorok ghrok clock . ???
4b. at-voon krat pippat sat lat .	10b. wat nnat gat mat bat hilat .
5a. wiwok farok izok stok . /	11a. lalok nok crrok hihok yorok zanzanak .
5b. totat jjat quat cat .	11b. wat nnat arrat mat zanzanat .
6a. lalok sprok izok jok stok .	12a. lalok rarok nok izok hihok mok .
6b. wat dat krat quat cat .	12b. wat nnat forat arrat vat gat . /

Learning to Translate

Your assignment, translate this: **farok** crrrok **hihok yorok** **clock** kantok ok-yurp

1a. ok-voon ororok sprok .	7a. lalok farok ororok lalok sprok izok enemok . /
1b. at-voon bichat dat .	7b. wat jjat bichat wat dat vat eneak .
2a. ok-drubel ok-voon anak plok sprok .	8a. lalok brok anak plok nok . /
2b. at-drubel at-voon pippat rrat dat .	8b. iat lat pippat rrat nnat .
3a. erok sprok izok hihok ghirok . / /	9a. wiwok nok izok kantok ok-yurp .
3b. totat dat arrat vat hilat .	9b. totat nnat quat oloat at-yurp .
4a. ok-voon anak drok brok jok .	10a. lalok mok nok yorok ghirok clock . / / /
4b. at-voon krat pippat sat lat .	10b. wat nnat gat mat bat hilat .
5a. wiwok farok izok stok . /	11a. lalok nok crrrok hihok yorok zanzanak . / / /
5b. totat jjat quat cat .	11b. wat nnat arrat mat zanzanat .
6a. lalok sprok izok jok stok . 	12a. lalok rarok nok izok hihok mok . / / /
6b. wat dat krat quat cat .	12b. wat nnat forat arrat vat gat .

Learning to Translate

Your assignment, translate this: **farok** crrrok **hihok yorok** **clock** kantok ok-yurp

1a. ok-voon ororok sprok .	7a. lalok farok ororok lalok sprok izok enemok . /
1b. at-voon bichat dat .	7b. wat jjat bichat wat dat vat eneak .
2a. ok-drubel ok-voon anak plok sprok .	8a. lalok brok anak plok nok . /
2b. at-drubel at-voon pippat rrat dat .	8b. iat lat pippat rrat nnat .
3a. erok sprok izok hihok ghrok . / /	9a. wiwok nok izok kantok ok-yurp .
3b. totat dat arrat vat hilat .	9b. totat nnat quat oloat at-yurp .
4a. ok-voon anak drok brok jok .	10a. lalok mok nok yorok ghrok clock .
4b. at-voon krat pippat sat lat .	10b. wat nnat gat mat bat hilat .
5a. wiwok farok izok stok . /	11a. lalok nok crrrok hihok yorok zanzanak .
5b. totat jjat quat cat .	11b. wat nnat arrat mat zanzanat .
6a. lalok sprok izok jok stok . 	12a. lalok rarok nok izok hihok mok . / / /
6b. wat dat krat quat cat .	12b. wat nnat forat arrat vat gat .

process of elimination

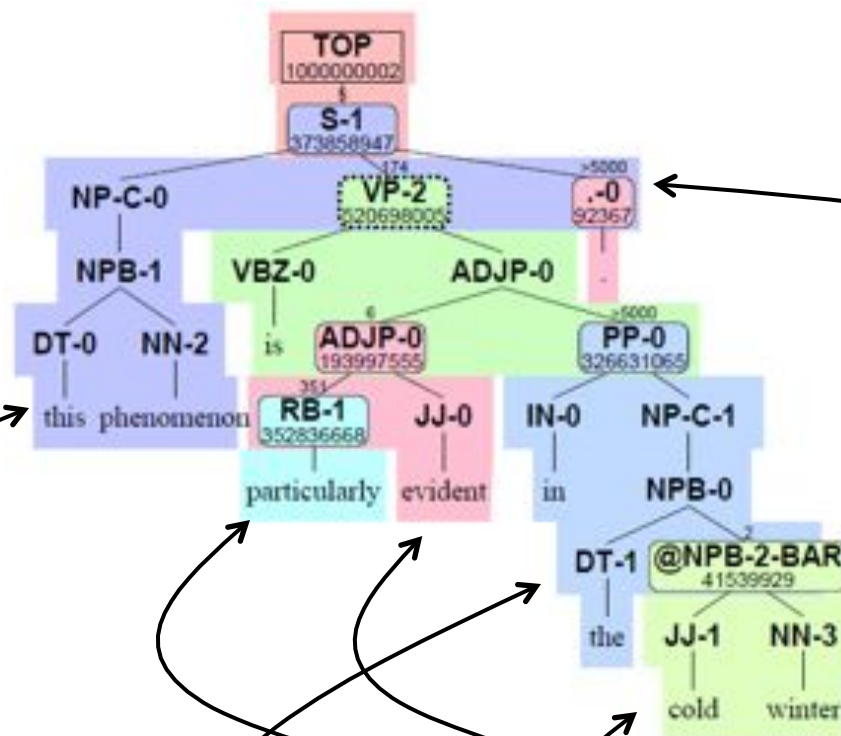
Learning to Translate

Your assignment, translate this: farok crrrok hihok yorok klok kantok ok-yurp

1a. ok-voon ororok sprok .	7a. lalok farok ororok lalok sprok izok enemok . /
1b. at-voon bichat dat .	7b. wat jjat bichat wat dat vat eneak .
2a. ok-drubel ok-voon anak plok sprok .	8a. lalok brok anak plok nok . /
2b. at-drubel at-voon pippat rrat dat .	8b. iat lat pippat rrat nnat .
3a. erok sprok izok hihok ghrok . / /	9a. wiwok nok izok kantok ok-yurp .
3b. totat dat arrat vat hilat .	9b. totat nnat quat oloat at-yurp .
4a. ok-voon anak drok brok jok .	10a. lalok mok nok yorok ghrok klok . / / /
4b. at-voon krat pippat sat lat .	10b. wat nnat gat mat bat hilat . / / /
5a. wiwok farok izok stok . /	11a. lalok nok crrrok hihok yorok zanzanak . / / /
5b. totat jjat quat cat .	11b. wat nnat arrat mat zanzanat . / / /
6a. lalok sprok izok jok stok . 	12a. lalok rarok nok izok hihok mok . / / /
6b. wat dat krat quat cat .	12b. wat nnat forat arrat vat gat . / / /

cognate?

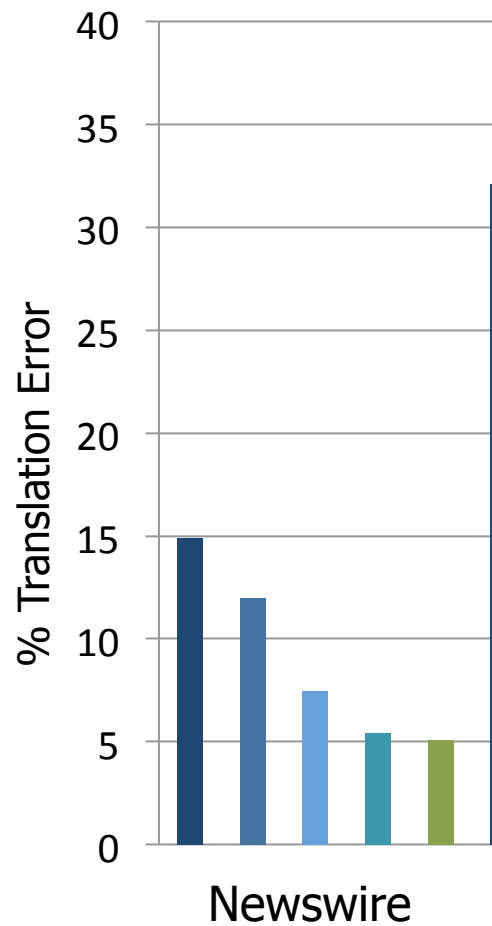
Assembling a Translation from Automatically Learned Rules



这种现象在寒冷的冬季尤其明显。

Machine Translation Error Rate

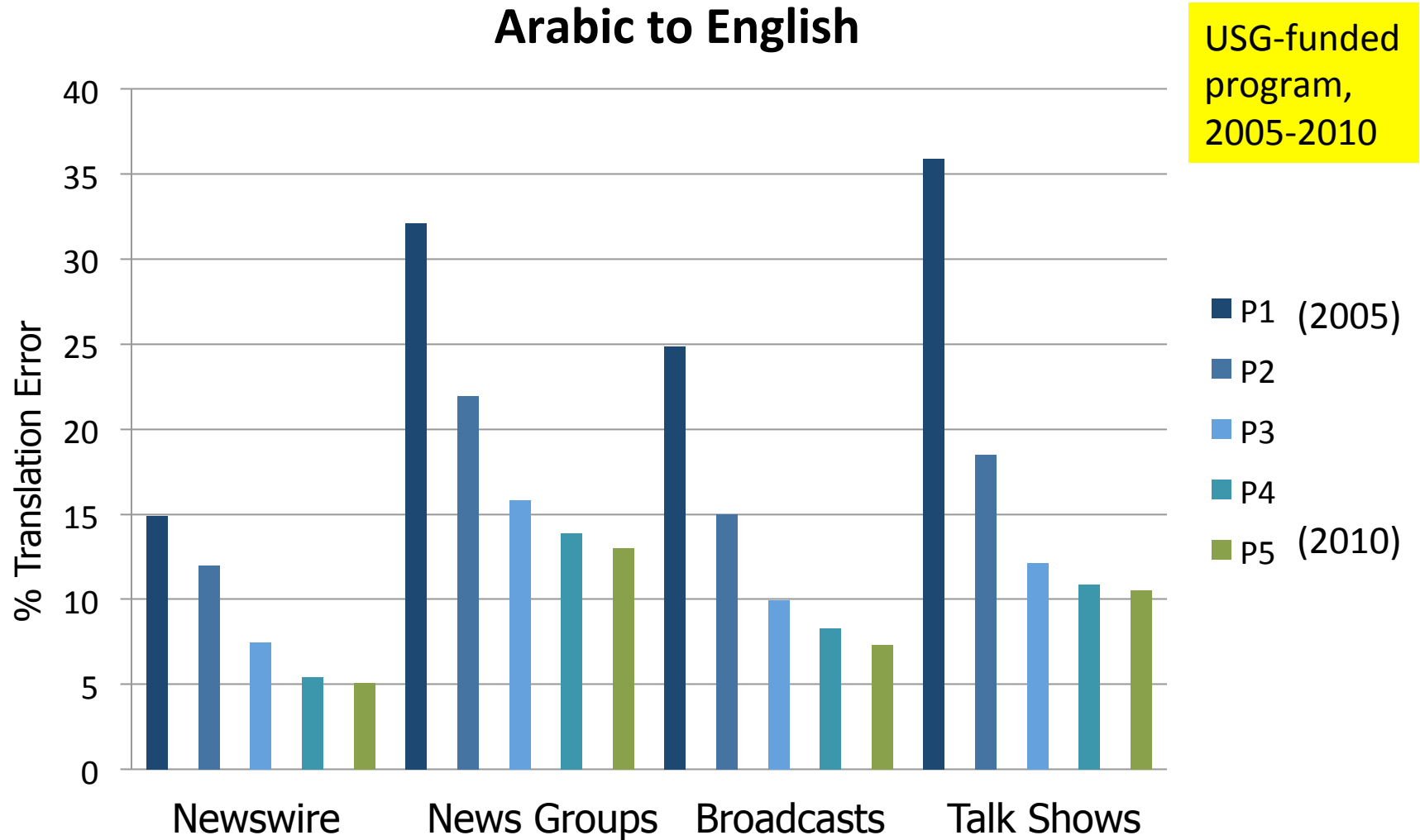
Arabic to English



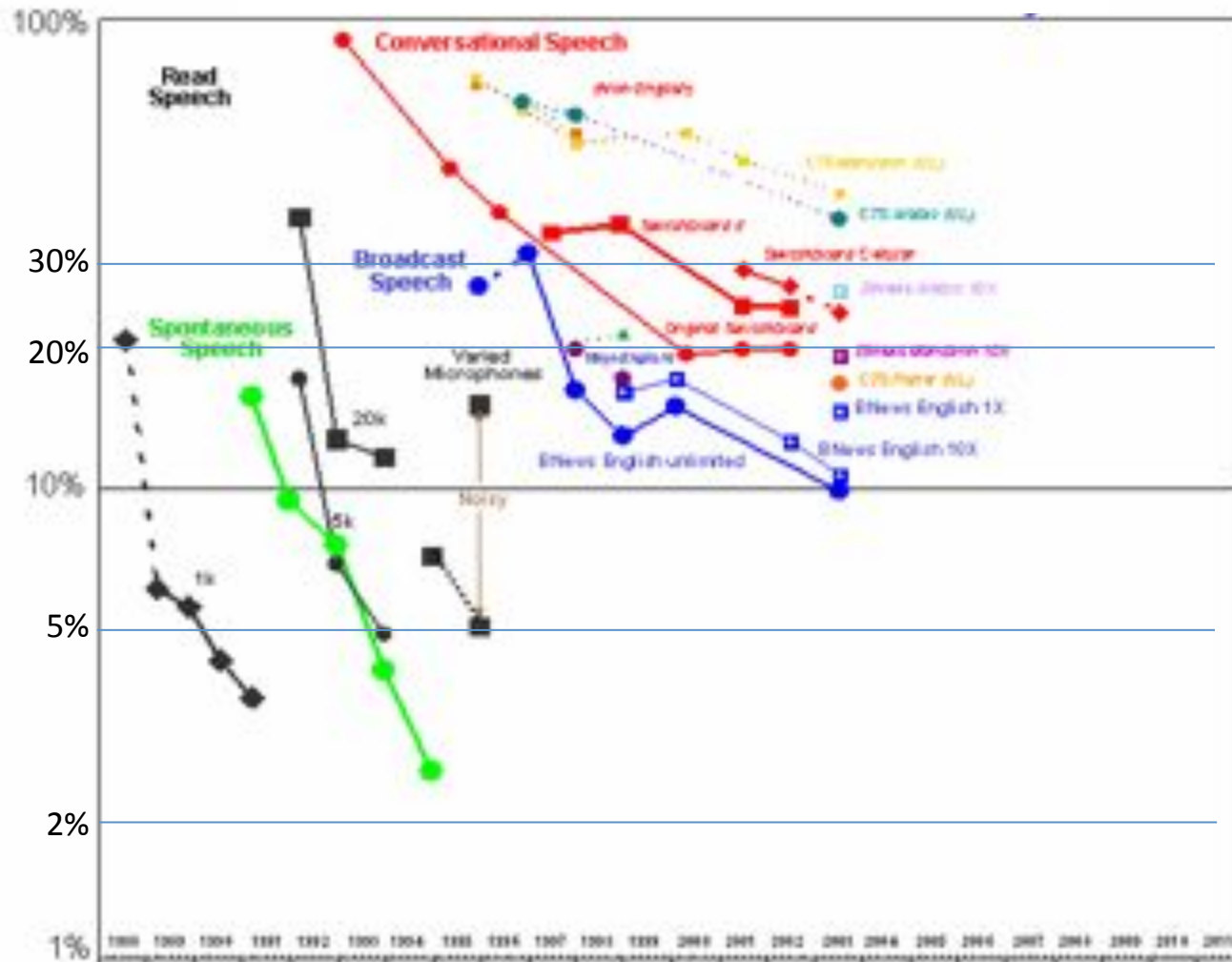
USG-funded
program,
2005-2010

- P1 (2005)
- P2
- P3
- P4
- P5 (2010)

Machine Translation Error Rate



Speech Recognition Error Rate



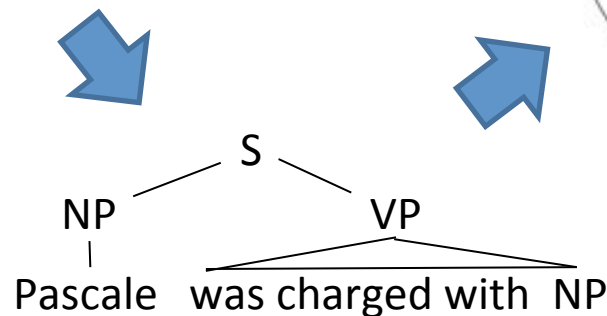
USG-funded programs
1988-2003

Benchmarking
by NIST

Lots of Progress, But ...

- Machines make lots of errors
- Machines need a **deeper understanding** of what they read and hear

Pascale was charged with public intoxication and resisting arrest.



Pascale was charged

Pascale was intoxicated (?)

Pascale was resisting (?)

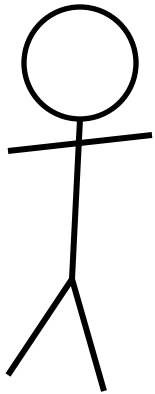
Pascale was being arrested

Things We Can't Do Yet

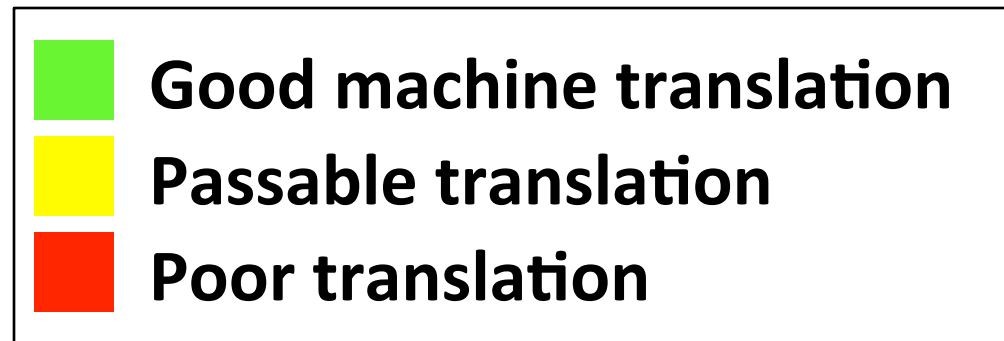
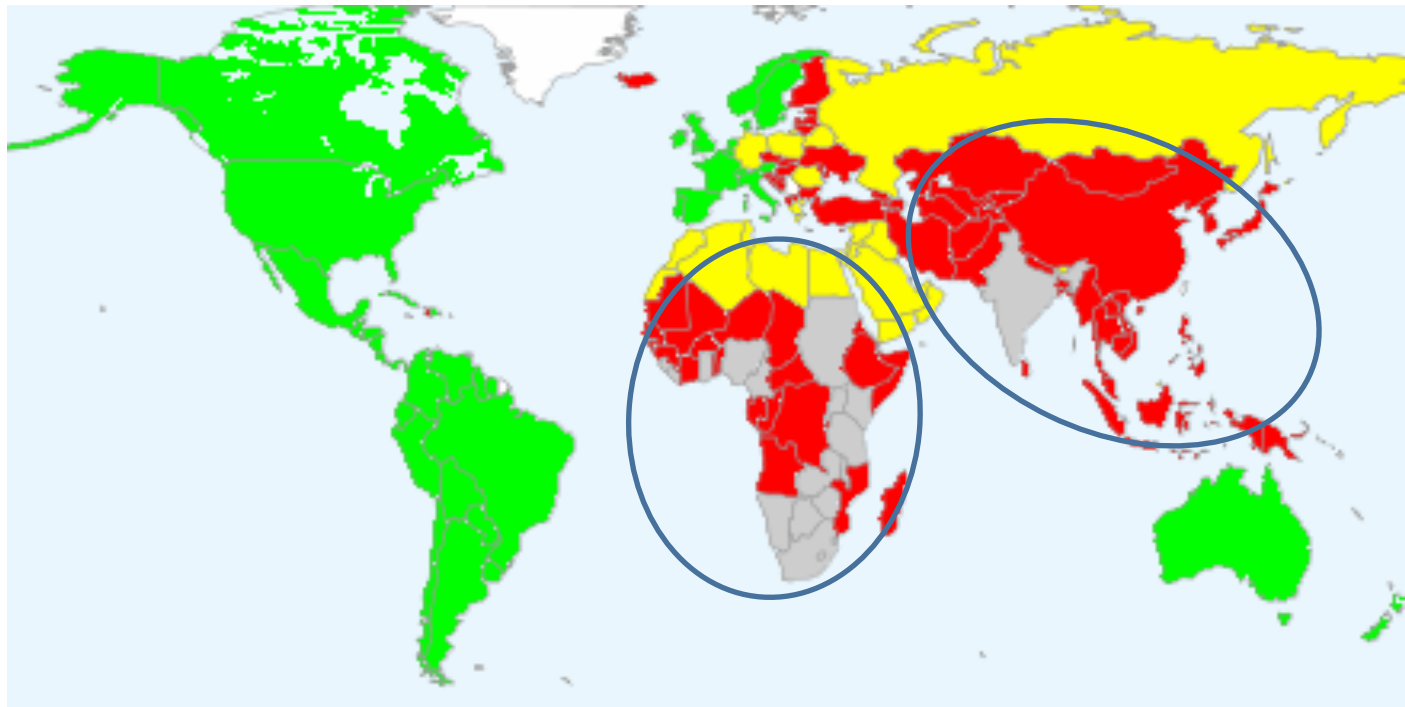
Ask that guy I had lunch with to send me the paper he mentioned.

Drive me to that Italian place in Santa Monica.

Publish my story in Bengali.



Let's Not Forget ...



questions?

backup

Machine Translation Error Rate

