

CRACKER – Cracking the Language Barrier. Selected Results 2015/2016

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Abstract. CRACKER is a Coordination and Support Action (ref. 645357; 01/2015–12/2017), funded by the EU. The consortium consists of seven partners: DFKI GmbH (DE); Charles Univ. in Prague (CZ); ELDA (FR); FBK (IT); R.C. “Athena” (GR); Univ. of Edinburgh (UK); Univ. of Sheffield (UK). Details are available at <http://www.cracker-project.eu>.

Description – Summary and Selected Results 2015/2016

The European MT research community is experiencing increased pressure for rapid success – from the political frameworks of the EU, but also from the business world. CRACKER pushes towards an improvement of MT research by implementing the successful example of other disciplines where massively collaborative research on shared resources – guided by interoperability, standardisation, challenges and success metrics – has led to important breakthroughs. The nucleus of this new R&D&I strategy is the group of projects funded through the call H2020-ICT-2014 topic 17, that is supported by CRACKER in coordination, evaluation and resources as well as in community building activities. CRACKER builds upon, consolidates and extends initiatives for collaborative MT research supported by earlier EU-projects.

In terms of selected results (2015/2016), a large number of evaluation tasks are now jointly organised by the IWSLT and WMT workshops. WMT went from five tasks in 2015 to ten tasks in 2016. IWSLT featured automatic speech recognition tasks (English, German), and spoken language translation and MT tasks involving English, German, French, Chinese, Czech, Thai, and Vietnamese. After a successful MT Marathon 2015 the event will again take place in Prague in September 2016, covering lectures, labs, projects, and tools. CRACKER co-organises, with the project QT21, an LREC 2016 Workshop on Translation Evaluation, bringing together representatives from language service providers and researchers working on high-quality MT, SMT and human evaluation. Resource sharing in CRACKER builds upon and extends the open resource exchange infrastructure META-SHARE. Its new version restructures the relevant content and aggregates it into one place; it also includes improved search as well as an updated licensing module. In terms of community building and outreach, CRACKER organised META-FORUM 2015 (and co-organised the Riga Summit 2015) and prepared, with the project LT_Observatory, a Strategic Agenda – an updated version will be presented at META-FORUM 2016 (Lisbon, July 4/5). CRACKER is also the main driver behind the emerging “Cracking the Language Barrier” federation of European organisations and projects working on technologies for multilingual Europe.