

The production of parliamentary reports

A RESEARCH ABOUT THE METHODS
USED IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

THE CONTEXT:

What our future could be like?

- Screening of parliamentary stenotyping (5th november congress)
- The constitutional reform and the new Senate
- The activity of the Debates services inside a new frame (different workflow)
- Taking inspiration from other Parliaments to improve

Reached Parliaments:

- Austria, Czeck Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Great Britain (and also Scotland), Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Swiss, Turkey
- Canada, USA
- Argentina, Brasil
- North Korea, Japan
- Cameroon

Parliaments to reach:

- Belgium, Greece, Iceland, Portugal, Sweden, Norway, Eastern Europe...
- Afrika
- Latin America
- China, India
- Australia
- Indonesia

THE PARLIAMENTS

About reports

- Verbatim and summary?
- Plenary and Committees?
- What method?
- How long does it take?
- Unrevised text on line?
- Speakers corrections?
- The final text: when?
- Is this satisfying?
- Who is the audience?

About reporters

- Outsourcing?
- Debates service organization
- Recruitment and qualifications
- Training
- How many employees?
- Revisors and corrections

THE QUESTIONS

Public sessions

- The different situation of the **Senate of Cameroon**
- In **Canadian Senate** the plenary is always public
- E.g. in **Council of Russian Federation** the plenary can be held behind closed doors

Confidential meetings

- In **British Parliament** reporters are excluded from secret sessions
- In **Italian Senate** the report of special Committees that stand in camera is secret and available only for Committee members
- In **German Bundesrat** the meetings of all expert Committees are confidential

THE PUBLICITY OF THE DEBATES

Both Plenary and Committees

- Hungarian National Assembly
- Irish Parliament
- Grand National Assembly of Turkey
- National Assembly of South Korea
- Spanish Parliament
- Sejm of Poland...

Plenary and some Committees

- British Parliament
- Dutch House of Representatives
- French National Assembly
- German Bundestag
- US Congress

THE VERBATIM REPORTS

Some reports record only the plenary activity:

- Czech Chamber of Deputies
- Danish Parliament
- Finnish Parliament
- Romanian Senate
- Swiss Federal Assembly ...

THE VERBATIM REPORTS

In the plenary

- Austrian Parliament
- Canadian Senate
- Dutch House of Representatives
- Finnish Parliament
- French Senate

In the Committees

- Czech Chamber of Deputies
- Danish Parliament
- French National Assembly
- German Bundestag
- Romanian Senate
- Swiss Federal Assembly

SUMMARY REPORTS

Shorthand writing

- Austrian Parliament
- Brazilian Senate
- Czech Chamber of Deputies
- German Parliament
- Grand National Assembly of Turkey ...

Stenotyping

- Argentinian Senate
- Cameroonian Parliament
- Canadian Senate
- Italian Senate
- National Assembly of South Korea
- Spanish Senate
- US Congress

THE METHODS: STENOGRAPHY

Digital recording

- British Parliament
- Canadian House of Commons
- Council of Russian Federation
- Dutch House of representatives
- Finnish Parliament
- Irish Parliament
- Swiss Federal Assembly
- Scottish Parliament

Voice recognition

- Danish Parliament
- Japanese National Diet
- Italian Chamber of Deputies

THE METHODS

- 141 in British House of Commons
- 120 in National Assembly of South Korea
- 81 in Brazilian Senate
- 94 in Grand National Assembly of Turkey
- 59 in Irish Parliament
- 54 in Dutch House of Representatives
- 40 in Swiss Federal Assembly and US Congress
- 39 in Spanish Chamber of Deputies
- 36 in Argentinian Senate
- 35 in French National Assembly

THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF STAFF

- 33 in Scottish Parliament
- 32 in Spanish Senate
- 30 in German Bundestag
- 29 in Canadian Senate
- 28 in Hungarian National Assembly
- 27 in French Senate
- 24 in Danish Parliament
- 21 in Finnish Parliament
- 17 in Council of Russian Federation
- 12 in Austrian Parliament
- 10 in Romanian Senate
- 3 in German Bundesrat

A mixed system

- British Parliament
- Canadian House of Commons
- Czech Chamber of Deputies
- German Bundesrat
- Hungarian National Assembly
- Italian Senate
- Senate of Cameroon

An occasional outsourcing

- Austrian Parliament
- Canadian Senate
- Dutch House of Representatives
- Irish Parliament
- Scottish Parliament
- Spanish Senate
- US Congress

THE OUTSOURCING

Only internal staff

- Council of Russian Federation
- Danish Parliament
- Finnish Parliament
- French National Assembly
- Grand National Assembly of Turkey
- National Assembly of South Korea
- Sejm of the Republic of Poland
- Swiss Federal Assembly

- 63 in Grand National Assembly of Turkey
- 49 in German Bundestag
- 40 in Swiss Federal Assembly and Irish Parliament
- 29 in Austrian Parliament and Canadian Senate
- 24 in Spanish Parliament
- 20 in British Parliament and Danish Parliament
- 18 in French Senate
- 16 in Finnish Parliament
- 13 in Hungarian National Assembly

PEOPLE INVOLVED IN ONE SITTING

- 12 in Council of Russian Federation, Argentinian Senate and Czech Chamber of Deputies
- 9 in US Congress
- 8 in German Bundesrat
- 3 + x in Sejm of the Republic of Poland

IN THE PLENARY:

- 1 hr in Danish Parliament
- 30 mins in Canadian and Cameroonian Senate
- 20 mins in Austrian Parliament
- 15 mins in French Parliament, German Bundesrat and US Congress
- 10 mins in Hungarian National Assembly and Czech Chamber of Deputies

THE REPORTERS SHIFT TURNS

- **10 or 5 mins** in British House of Commons, Finnish Parliament and Irish Parliament
- **5 mins** in Scottish Parliament, Spanish Senate, Dutch House of Representatives, Argentinian Senate, German Bundestag, Council of Russian Federation, National Assembly of South Korea, Italian Senate
- **2,5 mins** in Grand National Assembly of Turkey

- 20 mins text to edit in 4,5 hrs in Austrian Parliament
- 15 mins in 4 hrs in French Parliament
- 15 mins in 30 mins in US Congress
- 10 mins in 80-90 mins in Hungarian National Assembly and Czech Chamber of Deputies
- 10 mins in 2 hrs in Irish Parliament
- 10 mins in 3-4 hrs in British House of Commons

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WRITING AND EDITING

- 5 mins in 1 hr in Scottish Parliament
- 5 mins in 55 mins in Spanish Senate
- 5 mins in 50 mins in German Bundestag and Council of Russian Federation
- 5 mins in 35 mins in Italian Senate
- 2,5 mins in 30-45 mins in Grand National Assembly of Turkey

Many levels

- German Bundestag (4)
- Canadian Senate (4)
- French Senate
- Council of Russian Federation

Two levels

- Grand National Assembly of Turkey
- Hungarian National Assembly
- Irish Parliament
- Italian Senate
- Scottish Parliament
- Spanish Senate
- Swiss Federal Assembly
- US Congress

REVISING LEVELS

One revising level

- Czech Chamber of Deputies
- Austrian Parliament
- Senate of Cameroon
- Finnish Parliament
- British House of Commons
- Danish Parliament

- Senate of Italian Republic 40 mins
- Grand National Assembly of Turkey 45 mins
- Brazilian Senate and Swiss Federal Assembly 1 hr
- Czech Chamber of Deputies 1,5 hr delay
- US Congress, Spanish Senate, Hungarian National Assembly, Dutch House of Representatives, Finnish Parliament 2 hrs
- Argentinian Senate and Scottish Parliament 2,5 hrs

THE DRAFT ONLINE THE SAME DAY

- British Parliament, Danish Parliament, Austrian Parliament, National Assembly of South Korea 3 hrs
- French National Assembly 4 hrs
- German Bundestag and Sejm of the Republic of Poland 5 hrs

THE FINAL VERSION IS ONLINE THE DAY AFTER

- Canadian Senate by 7 am
- Canadian House of Commons
- Irish Parliament

THE FINAL VERSION IS READY AFTER A LONGER TIME

- French Senate and Cameroonian Senate 48 hrs
- German Bundesrat after 2-3 working days
- Japanese National Diet after a week

Parliaments satisfied

- Canadian Senate, US Congress and National Assembly of South Korea
- German Bundesrat, Austrian Parliament, French National Assembly, Grand National assembly of Turkey and Hungarian National Assembly
- Swiss Federal Assembly

Parliaments willing to improve technology

- British Parliament
- Czech Chamber of Deputies
- Danish Parliament
- Dutch House of Representatives
- French Senate
- German Bundestag
- Spanish Parliament

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR KIND
ATTENTION!**

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SENATO DELLA REPUBBLICA ITALIANA

THE PRODUCTION OF PARLIAMENTARY REPORTS

A RESEARCH ABOUT THE METHODS USED IN DIFFERENT PARLIAMENTS

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08/10/2016

SLIDE 1: THE CONTEXT

Dear IPRS friends, first of all I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity of sharing with you the first results of this research, even though it was impossible for me to be here with you today. Those results are now just partial and will be updated in the next months, so hopefully I will be able to fully present them in Berlin.

As a reporter of the Senate of the Italian Republic, in the last month I joined a project leaded by the Institutional Communication Department aimed at knowing how reports are produced in the Parliaments of Europe and all around the world. For this purpose, it's been a valuable experience for me to be present in the last Intersteno Congress in Budapest, where I could meet many of you and get useful contacts to send around the questionnaire through we realized this research. This is why I want to thank all the colleagues who wanted to dedicate their time to share their experiences, because I strongly believe that this is an interesting opportunity to grow as professionals for everybody and a stimulating occasion of opening our perspectives.

Why did the Italian Senate want to lead this research right now? Two were the reasons: first of all, last 5th November we had organized a Congress aimed at celebrating the bicentenary of the birth of the inventor of the stenomachine we've been using since XIX century, so we wanted to screen the use of stenotyping in European Parliaments and above; secondly, in the next weeks, the Italian citizens will be called to express their opinion about the constitutional reform written by the Government and approved by the Parliament, aimed at changing the composition and the role of the Senate of the Italian Republic. Willing to play an active role in this period of change, the Reporting Service of the Senate - I'm proudly part of - wanted to know the best practices spread around, in order to analyze what we can improve. In fact, if the popular vote will be positive, the workflow of the new Senate will be consequently different, but if the reform won't be approved, we'll have to keep on coping with the same workflow with half the headcount, compared to the past, due to the retirements of the last years and the actual block of the recruitment of civil servants, so it will be anyway useful to catch as many good suggestions as possible.

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SLIDE 2: THE PARLIAMENTS INVOLVED IN THE RESEARCH

Before going to the core of the research, I will start by making some clarifications about the partiality of the results of this research: in some cases we didn't receive a full answer to all the questions, even because not in all cases the questions were replied directly by reporters, but by other employees belonging to different departments (e.g. the library service); in addition to this, we couldn't always reach both Chambers of bicameral Parliaments (when we could, we considered them separately when the administrations and the procedures described are very different, like it happens in Italy). So I ask your cooperation since now to enlarge our research.

These are the Countries that we were able to reach: in Europe, Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Great Britain (and also Scotland), Hungary, Ireland, Italy (and also Sicily), the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain and Swiss; beyond Europe, USA, Canada, Argentina, Brasil, Turkey, North Korea, Japan and Cameroon.

SLIDE 3: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questions we asked could be divided into two groups, about the reports and about the reporters and the departments they belong to.

In detail, we asked about the publicity of the debates (do they report just the plenary sessions or the Committees too?) and the kind of reports produced (verbatim or summary report or session communiqué); the method used to record verbatim reports (audio records and typing, shorthand typing, stenotyping, respeaking or automatic voice recognition), the relationship between the recording time and the reporting time and if the drafts go on line and when the final text is ready; finally, the efficiency of the performance and the future perspectives.

About the reporters, we asked the total number of reporters involved in reporting one session, the editing levels, the revision depth and the corrections that the speakers are allowed to do; the organization of the Debates service; the recruitment of the reporters and their training; finally, the eventual outsourcing of the service.

In this summarized presentation we'll only talk about what strictly concerns the production of parliamentary reports like the methods used, the staff involved in the process, the editing levels and the publication of the drafts; we'll leave apart for the moment the aspects concerning the recruitment and the training of the reporters, the MPs correction requests, the depth of the editing phase (like formal languages corrections that respect the speaker's style), the best practices to consider as an inspiration and the description of physical and non-verbal events, in order to debate them deeply hopefully in next meeting in Berlin. So stay tuned!

SLIDE 4: THE PUBLICITY OF THE DEBATES

First of all, we wanted to investigate **the publicity of the parliamentary works**: the plenary meetings are normally public in the majority of the Parliaments and so do the parliamentary reports, since they were born, because the publicity of the parliamentary activity is their main purpose. But, first of all, I'd like to drive your attention to the totally different situation we found in the Senate of Cameroon, that will sound really distant from our realities: whereas in some Countries two Chambers have been reduce to one, in this one the Senate has been instituted as a second Chamber only in 2013. The verbatim report of the plenary meetings - both in English and French, the two official languages - is distributed to all senators, but it's not available to the public. At the end of the legislature the Official debates Journal will be published and deposited in the Senate's archives (so the first one hasn't been done yet); Committee reports are not published and can be consulted by Committee members, at very restricted conditions.

Apart from this peculiar situation, normally **there can be sometimes a secret session** or a confidential meeting or the House can decide to sit in private: what about the verbatim reports in those cases?

- In **British Parliament** (both House of Lords and House of Commons), when speeches are delivered in secret session the Official reporters are excluded;
- whereas in **Canadian Senate**, the plenary session is always in public, but Committees can and do meet frequently in camera either with or without reporting;
- in **Council of Russian Federation**, in some cases, plenary sittings could be held behind closed doors;
- in the **Italian Senate**, when special Committees deliberate to stand in camera, the report is indeed recorded by stenotypists, but it is secret, doesn't go online and it's printed in just one copy, available only for Committees members;
- in **German Bundesrat**, the meetings of all expert Committees are confidential and are available just for a small group of recipients.

SLIDE 5: PLENARY AND COMMITTEES IN THE VERBATIM REPORTS

First of all, we investigated which activities of the different Parliaments are recorded: in the majority of cases, both plenary and all Committee meetings are recorded thanks to verbatim report: we are talking about the **Argentinian Senate**; **Canadian Parliament** (both House of Commons and Senate); **Council of Russian Federation**; the **Grand National Assembly of Turkey** and the **Hungarian National Assembly**, where even some other meetings and events, like conferences, are fully recorded; **Irish Parliament** (both House of Lords and House of Commons); the **National Assembly of South Korea**; **Scottish Parliament**, the **Sejm of the Republic of Poland** and **Spanish Parliament** (both Chamber of Deputies and Senate).

In some other Parliaments, all plenary meetings but just some Committee meetings are recorded through verbatim report (Committee hearings, Committees on Bills, Committees of inquiry and high profile legislative projects): in **British Parliament**, all sittings of the Chamber and the Westminster Hall and Committee meetings on Bills are reported verbatim and edited and the same happens in **French National Assembly**; in the **Dutch House of Representatives** of the States General all plenary and Committee sessions are recorded in verbatim reports and minutes by the Parlementray Reporting Office (but Committee sessions on procedures and agendas - Business of the House - are the exception to the rule); in the **German Bundestag**, a stenographic record is made of each plenary sitting, but, due to reasons of capacity, the recording of Committees and other bodies done by the Stenographic Service is concentrated on testimonials of witnesses by Committees of inquiry and interviews of experts in hearings on urgent or high profile legislative projects in standing Committees (in other cases verbatim reports are drafted by Committees Secretariats working exclusively on the basis of digital audio recording); in **US Congress** the Congressional Record includes both the verbatim report of the proceedings of the House of Representatives and of the Senate and the transcription of all House Committee hearings, even held outside.

SLIDE 6:

In some other Parliaments only the plenary is recorded in the verbatim report: this happens in the **Czech Chamber of deputies**, where from time to time reporters are asked to provide a verbatim record of some important Committee meeting, and in the **Finnish Parliament**, where the Committee meetings are normally not opened to

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public, unless they open when gathering information to prepare a matter; in **Danish Parliament**; in the **Romanian Senate** and in the **Swiss Federal Assembly**.

SLIDE 7: VERBATIM AND SUMMARY REPORTS

Now we know something more about the production of verbatim reports of the plenary and of the Committee meetings, but what about the summary reports (that we can distinguish from the minutes of the proceedings, where there's no discussion and that are wide spread)?

- In some Parliaments the summary reports are produced also in the plenary:
 - In **Dutch House of Representatives of the States General** summary reports of plenary sessions in the form of web articles (debates in brief) are published by the Parliamentary reporting Office on website of the House;
 - In **Austrian Parliament** plenary and Committees proceedings are covered in a summary form by the press releases of the Parliamentary Press Office, as long as Committees dealing with EU affairs; summary reports are prepared by the Stenographic Reports Department of the sittings of the Standing Sub-Committee of the Court of Audit Committee, the deliberations of investigating Committees, the sittings of Sub-Committees and informal Committees;
 - In **French Senate** the Summary Reports Directorate records the plenary and the standing Committees sittings, but also some other sittings;
 - In **Canadian Senate**, the Journals office - separate from the Debates Services - prepares the Journal of the sittings, a brief summary of the Orders of the Day, presented papers and reports, progress of legislation, votes, etc.
 - In **Finnish Parliament**, a Swedish summary is also produced with the topics and decisions of each session, but without the discussion, because that's the **second official language**;
 - In the **Italian Senate** there are no more summary report of the plenary due to lack of stenographers, but there's only the session communiqué, that is a very synthetic report that includes little information on the discussion and doesn't follow the chronological order, but gives for first the most important information, like the votes. Summary reports are always done in the Committees by the Committees secretariats, except in a couple of Committees, where there are two stenographers in charge of it. The minutes of the proceedings are done both in the plenary and in Committees, by their respective secretariats.
- In some other Parliaments, we find summary reports just in the Committees:
 - In **German Bundestag** and in the **Czech Chamber of deputies** the Committees and Commissions sittings are recorded in summary minutes taken by the Committees

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secretariats; the same happens in **Romanian Senate** and in the **Swiss Federal Assembly**;

- In **Danish Parliament** extensive summary reports are made only from Committee dealing with issues of the EU, whilst in **French National Assembly** there are no more summary reports since 2008.

SLIDE 8: THE METHODS USED TO VERBATIM RECORD

These are the methods used to record verbatim reports that we identified so far, starting from the most ancient to the most modern: stenography (pen shorthand or stenotyping), audio recording plus typing or respeaking, and automatic voice recognition.

1. Stenography allows the reporters to take notes during the sitting and then they need time to transcribe them listening to the audio recording and typing or respeaking, if they use pen shorthand or shorthand machines without Computer Aided Transcription systems (like in Spanish Senate). While pen shorthand is normally used to take note of the main events, especially if they can be missed by recording systems, like off-mike comments, stenotyping with CAT systems allows to have a full text in real time and to do even close captioning, like they do in Canadian Senate or US Congress.
 - I. Pen Shorthand is used: in **Austrian Parliament**, in **Brasilian Senate**, in **Czech Chamber of Deputies**, in **German Parliament**, in **Grand National Assembly of Turkey**, in **Spanish Parliament** together with stenotyping and **Argentinian Senate** together with stenotyping and voice recognition;
 - II. Stenotyping is used:
 - i. In **Spanish Senate**, where they use a grandjean stenotyping machine, that is not linked to a Computer Aided Transcription software, so the stenotypist transcribes the notes typing or using a voice recognition program while listening to the audio recording;
 - ii. In **Argentinian Senate**, with two different stenomachines (the Stenotype and the italian Melani method), in addition to pen shorthand and voice recognition;
 - iii. In **Canadian Senate**, where reporters use Eclipse software to translate their strokes against a developed shorthand-to English or French dictionary; the same software is used in the **Italian Senate of the Republic** together with the Michela stenomachine;
 - iv. In **US Congress**, where stenotypists use Diamante machines and CaseCATalyst software by Stenograph;
 - v. In **National Assembly of South Korea** with Koreasteno machines;
 - vi. In the **Cameroonian Parliament** they use stenotyping in English and French, with Stenograph Grandjean machines and Stentor software;

Stenotyping was also used in other European Parliaments:

- vii. In British Parliament today there are still a few reporters who use it;
- viii. In **French Senate**, today there is just one freelance stenotypist, whose career is formally compared to a clerk's role, but the use of stenotyping in that Chamber has never been officialized: he transcribes the sittings of standing Committees and other activities (like inquiry Committees or Committees on a mission) from pre-recorded broadcasts and he's never physically present; he uses a Stenograph Diamante machine and CAT system through Grandjean TIRO software;

SLIDE 9:

- 2. A DIGITAL AUDIO SYSTEM is used quite everywhere to capture the sound and then to help the reporters to transcribe their notes, frequently with stop-and-go function and a foot pedal; the CAT systems used with stenotyping synchronize the typed text with the correspondent audio, to make it easier:
 - I. In some Parliaments from the audio recording typists - or the same reporters - transcribe texts or dictate what they listen from the audio recording to the voice recognition system:
 - i. In British Parliament, Irish Parliament, **Council of Russian Federation** and **Canadian House of Commons**;
 - ii. In Finnish Parliament the discussion is recorded digitally with the DaletPlus system, then the typists write a first draft that the reporters edit while listening to the recording (a new digital system for parliamentary reporting, called Eduksi, has been recently launched);
 - iii. In **Dutch House of Representatives of the States General** the reporters use a digital audio recording and the VLOS-framework, a in-house developed computer network application (Reporting Support System) aimed at logging the proceedings in the plenary hall. The reporters don't need to make a shorthand transcript, but take notes (logging keynotes about speakers and floor actions by clicking pictures and icons and entering as well text by keyboarding): the data entered is synchronized via the network with a database on the VLOS server, so this is the framework of the segment of proceedings that the reporter must transcribe in a time-frame of one hour;
 - iv. In Swiss Federal Assembly they use a software called Verbalix Enterprise for the recording, segmenting, writing and publishing of the spoken word;

- v. In Scottish Parliament the reporters listen to the recordings done through digital audio software and input their 5-mins section of the report either by typing or using Dragon Naturally Speaking voice recognition software;
 - vi. In US Congress the 9 private contractors that help the Committee reporting staff use audio and video recordation and also voicewriting; the same happens in the Italian Senate, where they use the software Transcription Module - the same software used in the **Romanian Senate** - and the Dragon voice recognition software;
- II. In some other Countries the audio recording is used to check and complete the notes, taken by pen shorthand or stenotyping:
- i. In Austrian Parliament they use a digital audio recording system called Audio Client, that automatically cuts the recordo into 10mins parts: while the shorthand writer is in the plenary especially to get interruptions, the typist can start transcribing;
 - ii. In **Sejm of the Republic of Poland** shorthand writers are present in the chamber, the course of the session is recorded using a digital audio recording and computer operators make a transcription in a text editor;
 - iii. In **Czech Chamber of Deputies**, the audio recording is used to support shorthand and typing and voice recognition systems are used by the stenographers themselves for the transcription;
 - iv. In Grand National Assembly of Turkey, in Hungarian National Assembly and in **French Parliament** the stenographers listen to the digital record while typing to transcribe their steno notes;
- III. Finally, there are the voice recognition systems.
- i. The only Chamber where the respeaking is the only system used is Danish Parliament, where it is not used in real time inside the floor, but in the "transediting" (transcription and editing) phase, using a program called Edixi;
 - ii. The automatic speech recognition system is different from the respeaking because it is not used to transcribe and edit the notes while listening an audio recording, but it is used to transcribe directly from the speaker's voice to text. It is not so wide spread yet, due to the difficulty of recognizing many different accents and voices and of keeping up with the speech speed, even though is commonly considered as the system of the future and its use is lately increasing.

The **Japanese National Diet** (in both **House of Councillors** and **House of Representatives**), is at the current time the most documented example we have (but we just know that an outsourced automatic speech recognition system has been recently introduced in the Italian **Chamber of Deputies**). The CaptiOnline system, invented by Miyako Inoue, professor of Stanford University of California, introduced in Japanese Parliament in 2011, directly transcribes words from speakers and sends them via telephone to the central station in Tokyo, where 2 or 3 employees at the same time select conflicts and send the text back to the Parliament via Internet, in order to close caption the session; the stenographers take notes in the floor during the session, divide the text into 5 mins portions and correct the mistakes of the final result, that is not perfect at all.

So, the number of people employed is high, to select conflicts to make close captioning and to have a correct final text: the artificial intelligence can't do the entire job without the reporters and the only difference with the use of stenotyping in addition to CAT systems appears to be so far the easier training of the employees using voice recognition systems.

SLIDE 10: THE STAFF

The total amount of staff - including reporters and other employees - belonging to the different Reporting Services - that in some cases are independent, in other cases are part of bigger Departments - can vary very much, depending on different factors (like the presence of part time employees, the eventual outsourcing of part of the service and the extension of the tasks).

Considering those were the real numbers at the time when we received the answers, we have:

- **more than a hundred** headcount in British House of Commons and in National Assembly of South Korea;
- **between 90 and 80** in Brazilian Senate and Grand National Assembly of Turkey;
- **between 60 and 40** in Irish Parliament, Swiss Federal Assembly, US Congress, Italian Senate, the Dutch House of Representatives of the States General and the Spanish Chamber of deputies;
- **between 35 and 30** in Argentinian Senate, French Parliament, Spanish Senate, German Bundestag, and Scottish Parliament;

SLIDE 11

- **less than 30** in Canadian Senate, Hungarian National Assembly, Danish Parliament, Finnish Parliament, Council of Russian Federation, Austrian Parliament and Senate of Cameroon;
- **less than 10** in Romanian Senate and German Bundesrat (where there are only 2 stenographers and one office clerk).

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SLIDE 12: THE OUTSOURCING

Due to the lack of available staff that became more and more common in many Parliaments, the outsourcing of part of the service is now a wide spread reality.

- In some Parliaments there's a mixed system, where the reporters are civil servants, but there are also some authorized contractors: this happens in British Parliament, in Czech Chamber of Deputies, in the German Bundesrat and in the Senate of Cameroon;
 - o in **Hungarian National Assembly** there's a mixed system, but in the plenary civil servants are preferably involved (as well as in camera sittings, due to the so called national security screening);
 - o the **Canadian House of Commons** must outsource its closed captions;
 - o in the **Italian Senate** at the current time the contractors are only typists and their role in the plenary is to introduce the revisors corrections - that are written on paper - in the electronic files (but in the 80s they were also stenotypists, using a different stenomachine, the grandjean); in the Committees their role is to transcribe the audio files when the Committee meetings take place during the plenary or their workflow exceed the available staff capacity;
- In some other Parliaments contractors are hired occasionally, in times of peak of work: this happens in the German Bundestag; in Dutch House of Representatives of the States General; in Irish Parliament and in Scottish Parliament;
 - o In **Austrian Parliament** the contractors hired on days of sittings are both typists and shorthandwriters;
 - o in **US Congress**, this happens when the Committee hearing volume exceeds available in-house staff;
 - o In **Canadian Senate** if Committees meet elsewhere;
 - o In **Spanish Senate** only the transcription of the steno notes of Committee meetings can be outsourced;

SLIDE 13

- In some other Parliaments all meetings are covered by their employees: in French National Assembly, in Swiss Federal Assembly, in Grand National Assembly of Turkey and in National Assembly of South Korea;

- Verbatim records are compiled by the internal staff of the Records Offices in Finnish Parliament, in Sejm of the Republic of Poland, in Danish Parliament and in Council of the Russian Federation.

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SLIDE 14: HOW MANY PEOPLE IN ONE SITTING?

How many employees are involved in one plenary sitting to produce the verbatim report? Numbers can vary and in the Committees sittings normally less people are involved:

- In the **Grand National Assembly of Turkey** 63 staffers are involved **till 6,30 pm in every sitting**, but after that time 17 stenographers and 4 senior stenographer **leave**; we considered this peculiar work organization a good compensation for the long work day that is typical of the parliamentary activity;
- In the **German Bundestag** about 49 people are involved in one sitting, among reporters, typists, revisors, final editors, admins (who take care of the index, the annex, the diary, the distribution of drafts to speakers) and the head of the Stenographic Service;
- In **Swiss Federal Assembly** all the reporters work on all sittings, so about 40 people write the verbatim reports for plenary sessions and the minutes of the Committee meetings;
- In **Irish Parliament** all the 40 members of the staff are rostered among both Houses when sitting and their respective Committees;
- In **Austrian Parliament** and in **Canadian Senate** around 29 people are involved in one sitting;
- In **Spanish Parliament** in plenary sittings of both Chambers are involved between 24 and 18 staffers;
- In **British Parliament** there's a team of 20: the reporters rota for plenary sittings consists of 16 reporters and 4 managing editors (so with a relationship of 1 to 4); Westminster Hall is reported by a team by of 21 who cover Committee also;
- In **Danish Parliament** 15-20 transeditors are involed in one plenary sitting;
- In **French Senate** in the plenary, for the verbatim report, 18 reporters and 6 revisors are involved; **revisors are organized in two teams that cover two consecutive sittings (because French Senate works mainly in afternoon and evening)**; for the summary report in the plenary, there are 3 people involved: 2 reporters and one revisor (the reporters alternate among themselves every hour to become revisor); in Committees sittings, for summary reports, there are 7 reporters (whose shift turns last 1 hr) and three revisors involved (who stay all the sitting);
- In **Finnish Parliament** 16 people are on duty during plenary sessions and in **Dutch House of Representatives of the States General** there are 13 reporters involved (**one of them takes the role of editor in charge of the final revision**);

- In **Hungarian National Assembly** 13 people are involved;

SLIDE 15

- In **Council of Russian Federation** about 12 verbatim reporters work on plenary sittings, like in the **Argentinian Senate**, where 12 stenographers are involved, and in **Czech Chamber of Deputies**;
- In **US Congress** 9 people are involved and 8 in the **German Bundesrat**;
- In **Sejm of the Republic of Poland** the plenary session is supported on an ongoing basis by 3 employees of the Department of Record and on an additional number of employees that can vary, depending on the number of parliamentary Committees simultaneous meetings; each meeting of the parliamentary Committee is supported by an employee of the same department; this is the only case, as far as we're concerned, in which one employee can handle several Committee meetings, if rooms are next to each other.

SLIDE 16: THE REPORTERS SHIFT TURNS

How long does every reporter's shift turn last? And how much time do they have to transcribe their turns? What's the relationship between the time spent in the floor and the time needed for transcription?

- In the majority of the Parliaments the shift turns last around 5 or 10 mins, but in some cases they are longer:
 - In the **Danish Parliament** the 2 or 3 reporters who normally share a sitting are respectively present in the chamber for 1 hr, making a speech list in chronological order; then every reporter picks a coherent work sequence from the list and transfers it to the speech allocation interface and in the "transediting" phase, dictates segment by segment the first available speech in chronological order, even if delivered when he/she was not present in the chamber. As far as we are concerned, this is the only case in which it's not relevant for the reporter to be present in the chamber to listen directly the turn to edit.
 - In the two Parliaments where stenotyping is used in two languages, the shift turns are of 30 mins:
 - In **Canadian Senate** each stenotypist writes for 30 mins and then hands off to his/her partner, who will write for half an hour and hands it back to the first one, and so on until the meeting is completed (plenary or Committee). In cases of long sittings (more than 6 to 8 hrs), replacement teams will be sent and the first team will return to the office to join the transcribing pool;
 - In the **Senate of Cameroon** stenotypists write each 30 mins too and there are 4 of them in the Floor of the House, 2 for English and 2 for French report;
 - In **Austrian Parliament** the reporters take turn in the Chamber every 20 mins and the time available for editing is between 4 and 4,5 hrs;
- In other Parliaments, shift turns are of 15 mins:
 - In **US Congress** reporters work in a 7-member line-up, reporting 15-mins turns, that must be completed and sent to the editor for final proofreading before returning to the Floor (approximately half an hour); so **the relationship between the stenotyping and editing time is 1:2**; as long as the House is in session, the staff are all there;
 - In the **German Bundesrat** reporters usually start with two 15 mins shift turns, followed by another ten and five mins shift;

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- In **French Parliament** reporters are present in both plenary halls for 15 mins and have 4 hrs to transcribe and edit their turns, also checking quotations and procedure (it takes the French language a while for the passage from speech to text);

SLIDE 17

In the majority of other Parliaments shift turns are normally shorter (10 or 5 mins):

- In **Hungarian National Assembly** and in **Czech Chamber of Deputies** reporters take 10-mins turns then they have 80-90 mins to transcribe them;
- In **Irish Parliament** a reporter has 2 hrs to report a 10 min segment of proceedings and 1 hr to report a 5 min segment;
- In the British **House of Commons** the reporters take 5 or 10 mins turn and the production target is to have Mps' speeches available on the internet within 3 to 4 hrs;
- In **Scottish Parliament** for plenary there is a rota of 15 reporters, who take 5-min turns to edit in about 1 hr. **Some reporters leave early on particular days if they have caring commitments, like childcare.**
- In **Spanish Senate**, in **Dutch House of Representatives of the States General** and in **Argentinian Senate** the reporters take turns of 5 mins each and have a time-frame of 55 mins to produce their section of the report;
- In the **German Bundestag** and in **Council of Russian Federation** each reporter takes notes for 5 minutes and spends 50 mins developing them;
- In **National Assembly of South Korea** shift turns last 5 mins in the plenary and 15 mins in the Committee meetings;
- In the **Italian Senate** the plenary rota is made of 9 stenotypists whose shift turns are 5 mins, so they have to edit them in 35 mins.
- In the **Finnish Parliament**, there's a more flexible division of the shift turns, taking account of their difficulty: typists and reporters normally take an amount of 5-10 mins of whole speeches to work on, **but they don't have a specific time-limit with their shifts**: in order to save time and share effort, if a speech is exceptionally long, it can be divided into multiple parts;
- In **Grand National Assembly of Turkey** we have the shortest shift turns: 2,5 mins per stenographer and 30 mins per senior stenographer in charge of editing; in 30-45 mins draft verbatim reports are finished and after 1 hr they are published online.

SLIDE 18

In this slide we summarized the relationship between the time spent in the plenary in taking notes and the time needed to transcribe the notes and/or editing the text. When we find a big difference, like in the case of US Congress and French Parliament, the reason is first of all the method used - because stenotyping allows to have a real time text - and secondly the language and the editing level it requires. In fact, it takes a while to French language to be polished and ready for a written text.

SLIDE 19

Among the Parliaments where shift turns are of 5 mins, there are no big differences in editing time, except in Italian Senate, where, due to the little number of available stenotypists, the time of the editing phase has been more and more compressed, leaving untouched the quality of the texts.

SLIDE 20: EDITING AND REVISING LEVELS

- In some Parliaments, like in the **French Senate** and in the **Council of Russian federation** there are many editing and revising levels involved in a process that is very similar in the majority of the cases.
 - E.g. this also happens in the **German Bundestag**, where there are 5 steps: the front line stenographer dictates his/her 5 mins notes to a professional typist, then develops the first draft and edits the text, checking all names, figures and quotations within 1 hour; the revisor ensures that the text is complete, linguistically correct and accurate regarding to content; then the administration employees email the speaker his/her speech, approximately after 2 hrs it was held, who can make stylistic corrections within other 2 hrs; the revisor will check whether the speaker corrections don't change the content, according to the Rules of Procedure; two editors do the final review, ensure standardizing and permit imprimatur; the final version is passed by administration employees to an external printer;
 - In **Canadian Senate**, there are four levels of editing: reporters and transcribers of the unrevised; editors of the revised; translation and proofreading, prior to first print or online version; final review.
- In the majority of the Countries, there are two editing and revising levels: this happens in Irish Parliament (where the revision is done mainly on non-sitting days), in Spanish Senate, in the Italian Senate, in Swiss Federal Assembly, in Hungarian National Assembly, in Scottish Parliament, in Grand National Assembly of Turkey and in Argentinian Senate
 - In **US Congress'** Floor, the stenotypist send the draft to the editor for the first proofreading and then the reader of the Record has a final proofread of the Congressional Record; the Chief Reporter will also review any parliamentary procedure; The Committee staff are though responsible for any revision and final publication of the hearings transcripts that have been transcribed, printed and delivered by the Committee office 's reporters;

SLIDE 21

- In some other Parliaments there is just one revising level: this happens in Czech Chamber of Deputies, in Austrian Parliament and in the Senate of Cameroon;
 - E.g. in **Finnish Parliament** the reporters edit the text that the typists have transcribed, and the same happens in **Sejm of the Republic of Poland**, where

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shorthand writers are present in the chamber especially to take note of off-mike comments;

- In British **House of Commons**, the managing editors check the text and give it a final polish and the same happens in **French National Assembly**;
- In Danish Parliament the preliminary edition is published without any revision, then the final version is prepared in four stages: proofreading of a longer work sequence of edited speeches; then they publish gradually the speeches on the Internet, normally not during a plenary sitting (so this means that it could take several months the final version to be available online, because it's crucial that it is of a high quality); **all reporters proofread each others' work sequence and give feedback when necessary**; then there is the checking formal requirement rules phase; lastly, the locked online version of the report is released on the Internet by the reporter in charge of formal requirement rules.

SLIDE 22: THE DRAFT AND THE FINAL PUBLICATION

While the time needed for the final publication can vary a lot, following different factors (like the number of reporters involved in the whole process, if the transcription is done in realtime or not, if the proofreading is done during the sitting or not, the levels of revision or the deadline for the speakers to correct their speech), the draft report as a pre-released version during the sitting is not produced and published by every Parliament.

We're going to consider here not only the time it takes to the draft to be ready, but also if it's available only for MPs or for general public too, and the temporal distance between the realization of the draft and the final publication:

- In most Parliament, the reports go online on the same day as a draft:
 - In the **Senate of the Italian Republic** the draft is published on line after 40 mins (the senators have time to correct their speeches before this release only upon request, otherwise they can do it between the draft publication and the final online publication and printing, that are done at the end of the same day or in the early next morning);
 - In **Grand National Assembly of Turkey** the draft verbatim reports are sent via email to the speakers after 45 mins for their corrections and are made available to the public with 1 hr delay;
 - In **Brazilian Senate** the report is released online with 1 hr delay;
 - In the **Swiss Federal Assembly** every segment of speech is made available about 1 hr after it was held; a complete but not yet checked verbatim version is published on the same day of the sitting; the final report of a whole session (that is to say 3 weeks of plenary meetings) is published 1 month after the last day of the session;
 - In **Czech Chamber of Deputies** the draft is published online with a lapse time of 60-90 mins; it takes several days to get the final text because of language corrections, then there's a deadline of other 10 days for authorization;
 - In **US Congress**, in **Spanish Senate**, in **Hungarian National Assembly**, in **Dutch House of Representatives of the States General** and in **Finnish Parliament** the first draft is ready with 2 hrs delay, but the final version is available respectively the day after, a couple of days after, 3-4 days after, after several weeks, a couple of months later;
 - In **Argentinian Senate** and in **Scottish Parliament** the final text is available with a 2,5 hrs delay;

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SLIDE 23

- In **British Parliament, Danish Parliament, Austrian Parliament** and **National assembly of South Korea** it takes the proceedings to be available about 3 hrs, but the text of the debates is published online respectively the following morning by 6 am, the day after, in the days or weeks following the plenary;
- In the **German Bundestag**, the final proof-reading is posted on the internet approximatively 5 hrs after the speeches were held, the final electronic version is published the next morning and the printed version the next day at noon.
- In **French National Assembly** the report is published online within a 4 hr delay as a temporary version and normally doesn't go online during the sitting; the final version is certified by the President and is published on a special edition of the Official Gazette with a 24-hr delay;
- In **Sejm of the Republic of Poland** the report is ready approximately 5 hrs after the end of the session and the PDF version is immediately published on the website;
- In **Council of Russian Federation**, the verbatim report should be ready on the day of the plenary sitting, but it's not available to MPs or general public while the sitting is under way;

SLIDE 24

- In other Parliaments the reports go online as a final version the day after (or some days after): this happens in **Canadian House of Commons** and in **Irish Parliament**;
 - In **Canadian Senate**, the real time text is available on the internal Parliamentary network in the public galleries or for live or recorded broadcast, the drafts are available in 10-min increments and the complete and compiled unrevised text of the floor language is available in electronic format within approximately an hour of the end of the sitting and it is posted online within 7am the following morning; Committees' reports must be edited, translated and published within 10 working days;

SLIDE 25

- In some other Parliaments it takes the final version a bigger amount of time to be released:

- In **French Senate** the temporary version of the verbatim report is published online after 24 hrs of the return of the revisor from the plenary and the final version is available after 48 hrs; the summary report is available with a 2-hr delay;
- In the **Senate of Cameroon** there is no online publication yet and the final version of reports is available after 48 hrs;
- The **German Bundesrat** holds its plenary sessions on Fridays, editors work on Saturdays and Sundays and a proofread version is available on Monday morning, so the final version is published on the Internet 2 or 3 working days after;
- In the Japanese National Diet, there's a significant lapse of time between the real time close captioning service they provide, the final version of the report - that is available and printed at the end of the same day, but just for internal use - and the final online publication, that is released just a week after the debate.

SLIDE 26: THE FUTURE?

What about THE FUTURE? Are all reporting offices satisfied with the methods they use to produce verbatim reports or would they like to improve the use of technology?

- In a good amount of Parliaments, the different reporting offices appear satisfied with the organization of their work and with the results they get in terms of publication timetable and this is not linked to an exclusive method of production. They are all looking with interest to the voice recognition systems that, for the moment, have not reached faster or more reliable performances yet, especially in some languages (like French, Turkish, German etc.), even because it's not easy to cope with different dialects and the major part of the job, like editing the text, still remain to be done by reporters:
 - E.g. in **Canadian Senate** the stenotyping has provided great value for money, helping saving significant amounts of money year over year, particularly in comparison to the Canadian House of Commons who uses a type and tape system and then must outsource its closed captions, with a team that is more than five times the size for similar amounts of text production. As long as it's possible to maintain access to a pool of trained shorthand writers they do not anticipate a change in their method of reporting for the foreseeable future. They are keeping on monitoring the voice recognition systems progresses, that at the time are not considered able to provide the level of quality in both official languages nor fast enough when it comes to real-time translation.
 - They think the same in **National Assembly of South Korea** and **US Congress**, were they also use stenotyping;
 - Where they use shorthand writing and typing, like in **German Bundesrat**, Austrian Parliament, **French National Assembly**, and Grand National Assembly of Turkey there are no specific plans to change these methods, because they think it does not exist any more efficient arrangement,
 - In Hungarian National Assembly in particular, they consider perfect their system, as proved by the fact that there are a few mistakes in the reports (the last rectification is from 1999) and, at the same time, as it's difficult to find well-trained stenographers, they also keep up with technology;
 - Lately, in Swiss Federal Assembly, where they use digital audio recording systems, they will keep on using them.

- In some other Parliaments though, they are looking to improve their systems, for different reasons:
 - In **Czech Chamber of Deputies** they'll have to swap to another system in the future, because of the lack of young stenographers (it could be the respeaking in the editing phase, better than the new system of automatic speech recognition, even if it produces quite impressive results for Czech language);
 - In **British Parliament**, they are trying to introduce more widely voice recognition as **they are concerned about repetitive strain injuries**;
 - In **German Bundestag** and in **Dutch House of Representatives of the States General** they are considering to replace typists with speech recognition, whereas in **Danish Parliament** and **French Senate** they are waiting technology to provide a satisfying automatic speech recognition system;
 - In **Spanish Parliament** they forecast that stenotyping will disappear and will be replaced by the audio-video record (and this is probably due the fact that they never switched to computer aided transcription systems like in Canada, USA or Italy).

SLIDE 27

So dear IPRS friends, thank you for your kind attention. If you come up with some questions or ideas, please don't hesitate to contact me at giulia.torregrossa@senato.it. Stay tuned and see you in Berlin, with eventual important news, when the important incoming vote about our Italian Senate will already have taken place.

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