Using free online MT in multilingual websites

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Although the quality offered by free web-based MT services is extremely variable, these translation tools cover a wide range of language pairs and under certain circumstances they can represent a viable and cost-effective alternative to fully-fledged website localisation. Embedding online MT into the architecture and navigation scheme of monolingual websites can help to optimise localisation processes, reducing the need for labour-intensive and time-consuming online content management. This is particularly crucial for frequently updated websites with time-critical information that needs to be promptly disseminated in multiple languages, especially in the presence of tight budgets and limited human resources. Many website designers have recognised the potential of free online MT for this purpose, but often fail to integrate it appropriately, on top of which they overestimate the quality of the translation. This tutorial will offer a step-by-step introduction to good practice in integrating free online MT into monolingual websites to deliver their contents in multiple languages, where appropriate. The relevant technical issues in terms of design will be illustrated and discussed with real-life examples. The session will include short practical exercises.

Contents

- Background on website localisation

- Key issues in the design and development of multilingual websites

- Overview of free online MT services

- Key steps in the implementation of an MT-based approach to website localisation

- Examples of problems and weaknesses in common current practice

- Benefits and drawbacks

- Design options and strategies for implementation

- Recommendations for good practice

- Challenges and opportunities

Audience

This tutorial has a practical focus, and covers a range of issues in connection with the design and implementation of multilingual websites powered by free online MT. It will be most suitable for ...

- MT researchers, developers, vendors and end users

- Webmasters, web designers and web authors

- Providers of multilingual online information and localised e-services

- Localisation professionals

- Managers of web development projects and online content managers

- Usability consultants and human-computer interaction experts