

Practicum in Software Localization

Introduction

The term Localization (I10n) refers to the adaptation of software, web sites, and related documentation to suit the different technical, cultural, and linguistic needs of foreign regional audiences and markets. Localization requires the combined efforts of multidisciplinary experts in order to successfully complete a localization project. Among such experts, translators, engineers, and project managers have crucial roles: only the mutual understanding of each other's needs and goals will ensure the appropriate adaptation of the products and services at hand.

Course Description

This course is designed as a conceptual and selective hands-on introduction to the technical knowledge translators and project managers need to successfully operate in the localization industry. We define industry-specific concepts, outline the milestones of the localization process --including engineering, translation, testing, and publishing-- and explore them within the framework of a localization project. Roles and activities of localization professionals are also discussed. We cover essential computer programming and web site engineering concepts essential for efficient localization. Key topics include: programming notions and languages; numeral systems; bits and bytes; character sets and code pages; text, encoding, and markup; file management; locale specific instructions. Using state-of-the-art technology, students apply this knowledge to the localization of Windows-based application components and/or web site components. Tools used include Alchemy Catalyst, Passolo, SDL Trados, and/or Star Transit.

The main goal of this course is to introduce students with no special localization training prior to this course to some of the basic skills required to work in the localization industry in the following areas: technical translation, localization project management, language engineering, QA, and testing. Upon successful course completion, students will be able to:

1. Understand, identify, and describe the fundamental milestones of the localization process.
2. Understand and describe the role of the different professionals involved in the localization process.
3. Understand and identify basic concepts and issues of computer programming of utmost relevance in the success of a localization project.
4. Understand the functions, purpose, and mechanisms of state-of-the-art localization tools and apply them in the successful localization of application and web site components

Training Topics

- Introductory concepts and definitions
- The business of Localization. Why go global
- Software Engineering and Localization.
- Ingredients to build a computer program
- Why Localization came to be.
- Localization of software components.
- Web Site Engineering and Localization.
- A Localization Project: the localization process at work
- Internationalization issues
- Quality control and testing