

ITOLDU, a Web Service to Pool Technical Lexical Terms in a Learning Environment and Contribute to Multilingual Lexical Databases

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Abstract. The first stage of the ITOLDU project aims to facilitate technical English teaching, especially for vocabulary acquisition. We are pursuing two immediate goals: maximizing positive student contributions, even outside of the classroom, and minimizing teacher intervention. The resulting application is designed to support investigations on what can entice users to contribute collaboratively towards enriching a bilingual technical lexicon in a fertile teaching context. The second stage will be to investigate how to use ITOLDU and similar tools to elicit free (but not necessarily voluntary or even conscious) contributions to the research-oriented, linguistically very rich multilingual PAPILLON lexical database.

1 Introduction

The cost of building respectable bilingual or multilingual dictionaries specialized in a certain technical field is very high if one uses professional lexicographers and terminologists. Even if enough money is available, such professionals are quite difficult to find for many domains. Hence, several projects have been started to create such lexical resources via Internet, by setting up web sites requesting free contributions. However, it is difficult to entice web surfers to contribute without any kind of reward. This is the specific type of problem that the Papillon project (<http://www.papillon-dictionary.org/>) is encountering (Mangeot-Lerebours 2001, 2003).

One solution is to offer a service such as the Oki Electric web site (<http://www.yakushite.net>) where free access to the Pensée MT system is offered, in exchange for contributions to bilingual dictionaries (organized in a hierarchy corresponding to domains of interest and associated communities) (Murata 2003).

In our case, we would like to “populate” the Papillon database, by letting students in classes of computer science and English, in a French engineering school, contrib-