

John and Caroline are in the computing laboratory.

“John, ... I have been trying to write a short story using just the localizable sentences that are already encoded, ... to try to find out if that is possible.”

“That’s interesting.”

“Well, I have come up against an issue and I thought that I would ask your advice.”

“How may I help?”

“In the story I have two people in the story and I want to have the first person say ‘Good day.’ to the second person. Now if I were writing the story in English, I would put double quotation marks around the spoken text. Yet if, nothing to do with the story, I put ‘Good day.’ in an email to someone I would not use quotation marks. Also, how would one specify an inner quotation, where one uses single quotes? I think that just using quotation marks as we do in English here in England in the story could present problems with automated localization into at least some other languages.”

“Yes, that is an interesting problem. I will think about that.”

“Caroline, ... I have been thinking about that issue you mentioned earlier.”

“Thank you.”

“When localizable sentences are localized they do not have quotation marks around them, even if they are a direct question, because the message could be in an email or a text message. So I have decided to suggest four new localizable sentence items as follows.

OUTER QUOTATION MARK BEGIN

OUTER QUOTATION MARK END

INNER QUOTATION MARK BEGIN

INNER QUOTATION MARK END

They are not really localizable sentences as such yet they would be handled in almost the same manner. The difference being that they would not automatically have a space after them. When sending a message using localizable sentences one does not need to put a space between each localizable sentence. So these items can have distinctive code numbers so as to make programming a decoding program to handle them as straightforward as possible.”

“Thank you.”

“How is the story writing going?”

“Well, it is a bit problematic”

“Would you be willing to say what you have at the moment?”

“Yes, but it is not much.”

Caroline shows John what she has written.

It is snowing.

“Good day.”

“Good day.”

Caroline continues. “I could do with some more sentences to set ambience, like ‘There is a tree.’ and so on, but if I make them up that would defeat the purpose of the exercise because I am trying to write a story from the list of sentences that is available, not making them up for myself.”

“Yes, I understand. I will ask one of the other members of staff to devise a few localizable sentences that could be used in a number of different short stories and then I can give the list to you and then you could try to produce an original short story using those localizable sentences and the already encoded localizable sentences and the four quotation mark items that I devised. Would that be good?”

“Yes please.”

John is talking to Sonja and he has explained the issue that Caroline has raised.

“Could you try to produce a few, say seven or about that number, localizable sentences that could be used in a number of different short stories please. When you have done them could you bring them to me please and please do not discuss this with Caroline at all as doing so could spoil the experiment.”

“Yes.”

Sonja is thinking: she is sat at a desk with pen and paper.

The paper is blank at present.