"Hello Henry, that looks interesting, what is in the box?"

Edith has just entered the computing laboratory and noticed Henry holding what looks like a small cubic box, gently rotating it and looking at it carefully.

"Oh, hello Edith, …. there is nothing actually in it, I have just made it."

"Oh?"

Henry places an A4 sheet of white card on the bench in front of Edith, such that it is in landscape orientation for Edith to view.

Edith looks at the piece of card.

Printed horizontally across part of the middle are four contiguous squares. Of these squares, the second square from the left has another square contiguously below it, the third square from the left has another square contiguously above it. In addition there is a trapezium contiguously below each of the first, third, and fifth squares, a trapezium contiguously above the second, fourth. and sixth squares and a trapezium contiguously at the right of the fourth square. The first square has

Good day.

printed in it, the third square has

Bonjour.

printed in it. The second and fourth squares each have the glyph for the localizable sentence character that expresses both of those meanings in a language-independent single character manner.

Edith realizes that given scissors and glue or double-sided sticky tape, the card could be used to produce a cubic box the same as the one that Henry seems to have made.

"It is a sort of toy, I call it a locsencube", says Henry.

'Oh, it's a toy is it', thinks Edith 'Henry calls it a toy but I think that he just says that so as to try to defuse any possible criticism from people who just don't get his thoughts about it. Henry doesn't think it's a toy, it has some significance to him, toy perhaps in a general sense of something that whilst seeming simplistic has some sort of educational purpose, or some deep meaning, at least in Henry's way of thinking …. but Henry's thoughts are often far reaching and important. So just go with it.'

"Ah, the l-o-c part pronounced 'loke', as in 'localizable' and as in 'LocSARA'."

"Yes. The word locsencube comes from localizable sentence cube. It is a new word formed by using the first part of the first two words and the whole of the third word."

"So how does one use it please?"

"Well, if you hold it and gently rotate it, you can go from English to French, or from French to English, via the localizable sentence glyph."

"Ah, so a toy because it demonstrates the principle, but apart from that, it would need a locsencube for each localizable sentence, and for each language pair, so, though interesting and indeed useful to demonstrate the principle as a learning experience, ... yet not actually .... um, ... er .... generalizable .... for widespread practical use?"

"Well, that is basically the situation, but there is a bit more for which locsencubes could be used though."

"Oh, please continue."

"Well, if you have two locsencubes for localizations of the same localizable sentence, say, for example, one for English and French, as this one, and one for, say, Spanish and Italian, then you could go from English to Italian, by going from English to the localizable sentence glyph, then match the glyph with the glyph on the other locsencube, and then rotate that other locsencube to get the Italian localization."

"So a choice of four languages for the source language and then three choices for the target language, so twelve possibilities with two locsencubes."

"Yes. Then if you had a third locsencube with, say, German and Danish, you could use any two locsencubes and get thirty possibilities, some using one locsencube and some using two locsencubes. .... I am thinking that it might be helpful to add the standard language codes for the languages on the top of the cube, en for English and fr for French for example, and also to add the code number for the localizable sentence too, perhaps twice, once for each of the two uses of the glyph. So for this particular locsencube it would be !123 that would be used.

"I am also wondering about putting a QR code for the code number on the underneath of the cube, just in case it might be useful at some future time, but I am wondering if that might complicate the essential simplicity of the locsencube as a toy. .... I shall give it some thought.

"And also, there could be more than one sentence on each locsencube, though no more than about five or six as they might get difficult to use, yet a locsencube with the four seasons of the year listed per pale could possibly work well. .... Though that might make it difficult to put the code numbers on the top of the cube. I need to think about that."

"So how many locsencubes would be needed to be able to have some fun with the set of twenty-six localizable sentences that we use for the poetry events?"

"Ah, I'll need to give that some thought, one locsencube for the four seasons is fine, but I would like to think out how best to split up the colours, and how best to do the weather sentences, whether to have all seven on one locsencube or to use an extra locsencube."

"Hmm. It is an interesting concept, Could you possibly print me two copies of the one that you have done please, then I can keep one flat and use the other to make up a locsencube. It would look good on my desk."

"Yes certainly. Thank you."