Chapter 1 The Language Grid: Service-Oriented Approach to Sharing Language Resources

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Abstract Since various communities, which use multiple languages, now want to interact in daily life, tools that can effectively support multilingual communication are necessary. However, we often observe that the success of a multilingual tool in one situation does not guarantee its success in another. To develop a multilingual environment that can handle various situations in various communities, existing language resources (dictionaries, parallel texts, part-of-speech taggers, machine translators, etc.) should be easily shared and customized. Therefore, we designed our proposal, the Language Grid, as service-oriented collective intelligence; it allows users to freely create language services from existing language resources and combine those language services to develop new services to meet their own requirements. This chapter explains the design concept and service architecture of the Language Grid, and the approach of user involvement in the collective intelligence activities.

1.1 Introduction

Though the Internet allows people to be linked together regardless of location, language remains the biggest barrier: only 35% of the Internet population speaks English (Paolillo et al. 2003). The remainder is divided between other European languages and Asian languages. In fact, it is not possible for anyone to learn the languages needed to access all possible information on the Internet. In particular, Asian people are not taught neighboring languages. Few Japanese understand Chinese or Korean and vice versa. People learn English to collaborate, but often cannot think in English: serious barriers to intercultural collaboration exist, because the collaboration often requires elaborating new ideas in the native language. As there is no simple way to solve this problem, it is necessary to combine different ideas. Teaching English is one way, but learning another's language and

respecting another's culture are also important. Since one cannot master all languages, the use of machine translation systems is a viable solution.

The above background drove us to conduct the *Intercultural Collaboration Experiment 2002 (ICE2002)* with Chinese, Korean and Malaysian colleagues (Nomura et al. 2003). We thought that machine translation would be useful in facilitating intercultural exchanges. We gathered machine translators to cover five languages: Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Malay and English. More than forty students and faculty members from five universities joined this experiment. The goal of the experiment was to develop open source software using the participants' first languages: Japanese participants used the Japanese language, Chinese participants used the Chinese language, and so on. The experiment started in April 2002 and ended in December 2002. During this experiment, the following problems were found in using language resources. Note that language resources include dictionaries, parallel texts, part-of-speech taggers, machine translators and so on.

- Language resources are often not accessible because of intellectual property rights and prices. We can now see many new language services on the Internet. We tend to think that effective language infrastructures have been developed, since we can use machine translations to view Web pages. However, if one tries to create new services by combining existing language resources, he/she is soon forced to face the realities: the language resources available come with different contracts and prices. Contracts tend to be complex because of concern over intellectual property rights. Explanations of the pricing structure are often incomplete or confusing even if the price is high.
- Language resources are often not usable, because of nonstandard interfaces and low service quality. For application interfaces, users have to develop different wrappers for different language resources. There is no quality assurance for language processing software including machine translators. Users have to estimate their quality of services, when selecting one. Moreover, language resources are often not customizable. Machine translators seldom allow users to modify them; it is hard to add new words to their dictionaries.

To increase the accessibility and usability of language resources, we proposed the *Language Grid* as *service-oriented collective intelligence*, i.e., it wraps existing language resources as atomic services and enables users to compose new services by combining atomic services. To realize the Language Grid, however, we must deal with the following issues.

- *Service architecture*: The service platform should allow users to create services and share them. Based on various atomic services with standard interfaces, an infrastructure for service composition should be provided. The service architecture should also allow users to develop application systems for supporting multilingual activities in their communities based on the provided language services.
- *User involvement*: Collective intelligence platforms can grow only through the voluntary efforts of users (Weiss 2005). The more users provide resources, the

more they can utilize the benefits of the resources. Therefore, it is necessary to encourage the participation of both users and communities.

Researchers in several organizations including Kyoto University and National Institute of Information and Communications Technology (NICT) started working on the Language Grid in April 2006 (Ishida 2006). This project is based on collaboration between industry, government, universities and non-profit organizations (NPO/ NGOs). The remaining parts of this chapter are organized as follows. First, Section 1.2 explains the necessity of shifting from language resources to language services. Section 1.3 shows the design concept and the service architecture, and Section 1.4 introduces how the Language Grid is operated for user involvement.

1.2 From Language Resources to Language Services

This section describes why the service-oriented approach is promising for sharing language resources. To illustrate this, let us look at what would happen in a Japanese school, where the number of Brazilian, Chinese and Korean students is increasing. We use machine translators in this example.

Suppose the teacher says "You have cleanup duy today" in Japanese, it means "It is your turn to clean the classroom today," and foreign students cannot understand this. Puzzled students are invited to a multilingual room in the school. Sitting in front of a computer connected to the Internet, the teacher types these words in Japanese on the screen: "You have cleanup duty today." Then the translation of this sentence appears: "今天是你负责打扫卫生" in Chinese, "오늘은 네가 청소 당번이야" in Korean, and "Hoje é seu plantão de linpeza" in Portuguese. "Aha!" say the kids with excited faces. One of them types in their language "I got it" and translation appears in Japanese on the screen.

Is it that simple to use machine translation? Several portal sites already offer translation services. Let's try to use them. First, enter "You have cleanup duty today" in Japanese and translate it into Korean. The sentence "오늘은 너가 청소 당번이야" appears on the screen. The Japanese teachers do not understand Korean, so they are not sure if the translation is correct. They use *back-translation* which translates the Korean translation into Japanese again. This yields "You should clean the classroom today!" It seems a little rude to hear, but may be acceptable, if accompanied with a smile. Let's translate it into Chinese in the same way. The Chinese sentence "今天你是扫除值日哟" appears on the screen. The Japanese teachers back-translate this Chinese sentence into Japanese and find the very strange sentence "Today, you remove something to do your duty." It seems the Japanese word "掃除当番," which means duty to clean the classroom, was not registered in the dictionary of this machine translator.

It appears that we need to customize machine translators with local dictionaries. For schoolteachers, it is necessary to compile a multilingual dictionary of words frequently used in schools. Suppose the available multilingual dictionaries are adequate. To combine those local resources and machine translators, however, we need to negotiate with the companies that provide the machine translators, and make contracts with them. Let's assume all contracts are signed successfully. It is still not easy to combine machine translators and dictionaries, because the APIs and data formats are not standardized.

The service-oriented approach allows users to create and share standardized dictionary services while protecting the intellectual property rights of language resources. Fig. 1.1 shows how to create atomic language services from corresponding language resources. Data like multilingual dictionaries and parallel texts can be wrapped to create atomic language services to provide a translation of words or sentences. However, those atomic services do not have to be a simple retrieval function: a parallel text service can return the translation of a sentence that is similar to the input sentence. Wrapping software like machine translators is straightforward. Even human interpreters can be wrapped as translation services. Users do not have to distinguish machine from human translation services other than by their quality of services: machine translators can provide faster services while human interpreters return higher quality translations.

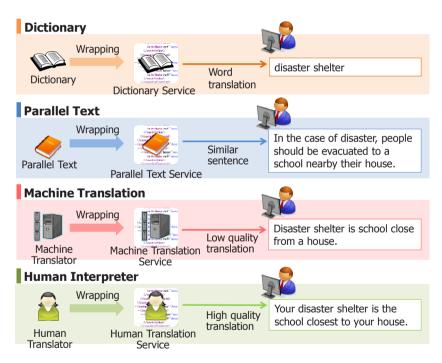


Fig. 1.1 Language service (atomic)

The next step is to compose atomic language services to create a new service. Fig. 1.2 illustrates the process of composing a variety of atomic language services for Japanese teachers to translate their announcements for Brazilian parents. To translate Japanese sentences into Portuguese, we first need to cascade Japanese-English and English-Portuguese translators, because there is no available direct translator handling Japanese to Portuguese. To replace words output by machine translators with the words in multilingual dictionaries for schools, part-of-speech taggers are necessary to divide the input sentences into parts. We can train *example-based machine translators* with Japanese-Portuguese parallel texts. We then have different types of translators including example-based machine translators and will face the problem of determining which one is best: example-based machine translators can create high quality translation only when they trained with similar sentences. We may use back-translation, say Japanese-Portuguese-Japanese translator that can produce back-translated Japanese sentences, and select the translator that can produce back-translated sentences most similar to the original ones. If the quality of translation is still not enough for the Brazilian parents to understand, however, Japanese teachers may use human translation services to create an announcement in Portuguese.

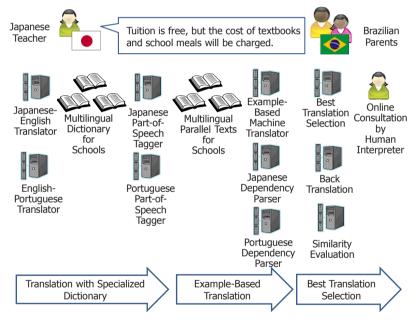


Fig. 1.2 Language service (composite)

By the way, part-of-speech taggers are often developed in research institutes or universities, and are provided only for research purposes. Their Web sites do not state that they can be used in schools, hospitals and so on. If an elementary school wants to use them, the school needs to ask those providers for permission by a letter or e-mail. One of the important roles of the Language Grid is to reduce such negotiation costs related to intellectual property rights.

1.3 The Language Grid

1.3.1 Design Concept of the Language Grid

As discussed in the previous sections, language resources already exist online. However, difficulties often arise when people try to use those language resources in their intercultural activities; complex contracts, intellectual property rights, and non-standard application interfaces make it difficult for users to create customized language services that support intercultural activities. To improve the accessibility and usability of existing language resources, we need to allow users to easily create new language services by combining existing ones. As shown in Fig. 1.3, the Language Grid should provide an environment where users can share language resources developed by both professionals and end users in various application fields. The word *grid* is defined as "a system or structure for combining distributed resources; an open standard protocol is generally used to create high quality services." Our approach, applying the grid concept to ensure the collaboration of language services, has not been tried before.

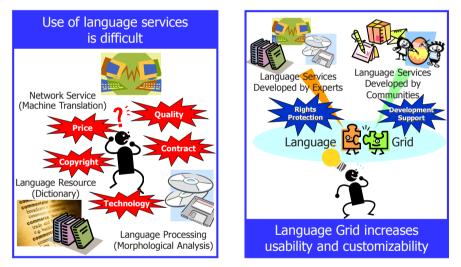


Fig. 1.3 Role of the Language Grid

To realize the Language Grid, *collective intelligence* is a promising solution, since it involves connecting people and computers so that collectively they act more intelligently than any individual or computer (Levy 1999) (Gruber 2008). Recent systems like Wikipedia are successful examples of content-based collective intelligence on the Web. For the Language Grid, however, we propose the *service-oriented collective intelligence* approach. Although the Language Grid lies in the domain of language services, it actually reveals some general problems in open service environments: how to collect and share services, and produce new

services on the Internet. In content-based collective intelligence, contents are always provided by either discarding the intellectual rights or accepting common licenses for the contents. However, the service-oriented approach should handle intellectual property rights issues so as to support service providers to protect their contents and provide services based on their own policies.

Fig. 1.4 illustrates the design concept of the Language Grid. The platform allows users to register services and share them. Major stakeholders of the Language Grid fall into three categories: *service grid operator, service provider* and *service user*. Service grid operator manages the Language Grid and controls language resources and services. Service provider provides language services such as machine translations, part-of-speech taggers, dependency parsers, dictionaries, and parallel texts and registers them in the Language Grid. Service user invokes registered language services for their intercultural activities. Note that stakeholders are not individuals but groups like research units in universities, and that a single group can act as two different stakeholders: service provider and service user.

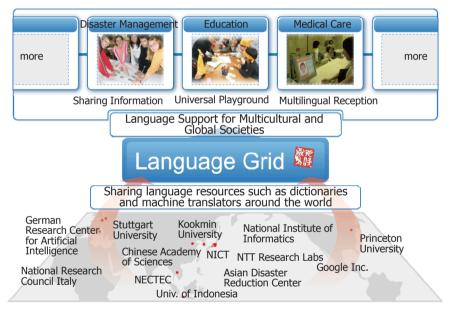


Fig. 1.4 Design concept of the Language Grid

Conceptually, the Language Grid has two main structures: a *horizontal grid* and a *vertical grid*. The horizontal grid concerns the combination of existing bilingual dictionaries or machine translation systems for various languages. The vertical grid concerns specific scenarios of intercultural collaboration activities, which require customized language services including jargon handling.

Among published studies, EuroWordNet (Vossen 1998) and Global WordNet Grid (Fellbaum and Vossen 2007) are pioneers in using word semantics to connect dictionaries in different languages. However, the Language Grid is an attempt to

build a platform that can combine language services provided by stakeholders with different incentives. Therefore, standardization of language services becomes quite important (Calzolari et al. 2002). There also exist several efforts to pipeline language processing programs: *Heart of Gold* (Callmeier et al. 2004) and *UIMA* (Ferrucci and Lally 2004). They aim at pipelining various language processing programs efficiently, but the Language Grid is more application-oriented and focuses on managing the intellectual property rights associated with language resources. Since the motivations are orthogonal, we have bridged Heart of Gold and the Language Grid (Bramantoro et al. 2008), and will apply the results to UIMA.

1.3.2 Service Layers of the Language Grid

As shown in Fig. 1.5, the Language Grid consists of the following four service layers. The bottom layer, called *P2P Grid Layer*, aims at connecting two kinds of servers (*core nodes* and *service nodes*). Core nodes manage all requests to language services, while service nodes actually invoke the atomic services. If the requested service is a composite one, core nodes invoke the corresponding Web service workflow that includes one or more atomic services. Registered information of language services is shared among all core nodes. The same services are provided, regardless of which core node receives the request. The core nodes also control access to services to fulfill the usage conditions set by the service providers. Service providers can access the usage statistics of the services they provide using a system called the *Language Grid Service Manager*.

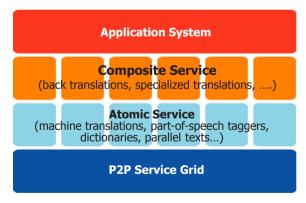


Fig. 1.5 Service layers

The second layer is called the *Atomic Service Layer*. In this layer, any user can add new language resources to the Language Grid. A Web service that corresponds to a language resource is called an *atomic service*. Each language resource is *wrapped* to develop an atomic service. The third layer is the *Composite Service Layer*. Atomic language services can be composed by Web service workflows. A

service described by a workflow is called a *composite service*. Various composite services have been made available up to now, including back-translations and specialized translations. For example, specialized translation can be realized using several atomic services, such as machine translators, part-of-speech taggers, and domain-specific dictionaries. BPEL4WS and Java-based scenarios are used to describe workflows. Currently, more than 90 atomic and composite language services are being shared via the Language Grid with standard interfaces. Table 1.1 lists all types of language services currently available in the Language Grid.

Service Category	Service Type	Number of Services
Translation	Translation Service	21
	Domain-Specific Translation Service	2
	Multilingual Mixed Document Translation Service*	0
	Back Translation Service	1
	Multi-hop Translation Service	2
Paraphrase	Paraphrasing Service*	0
	Transliteration Service*	0
Dictionary	Multilingual Dictionary Service	7
	Multilingual Dictionary Service with Longest Match	22
	Concept Dictionary Service	4
	Pictogram Dictionary Service	1
	Multimedia Dictionary Service*	0
	Multilingual Glossary Service*	0
	Dictionary Creation Support Service*	0
Corpus	Parallel Corpus Service	20
	Dialog Parallel Corpus Service	1
	Template Parallel Corpus Service*	0
	Morphological Analysis Service	7
Analysis	Dependency Parsing Service	2
	Similarity Calculation Service*	0
	Language Identification Service*	0
Speech	Text To Speech Service	1
<u>^</u>	Speech Recognition Service*	0
Other	Structural Alignment Creation Service* Service Management Service	0
Meta Service	1	

Table 1.1 Language services provided by the Language Grid

Service types marked with * are currently under development.

To realize the second and third layers of the Language Grid, Web service technologies including *language service ontology*, *horizontal service composition* and *service supervision* have been developed to enable the collaboration needed among language services. Language service ontology is a technology to define standard language service APIs in a hierarchical way so that end users are provided with simple interfaces while professionals can access more complex interfaces (Hayashi et al. 2008). For horizontal service composition, we apply constraint optimization algorithms to select the appropriate services and thus satisfy QoS requirements (Ben Hassine et al. 2006). To compose machine translators working on the same document or conversation, *context-aware service composition* is proposed: multiple translations are coordinated to determine the meanings of words consistently (Tanaka R et al. 2009). Service supervision, on the other hand, is a runtime technology to monitor and modify the process of composite services (Tanaka M et al. 2009).

Different types of *Application Systems* including collaboration tools have been developed on the top layer. *Language Grid Playground* provides easy access through a Web browser to the Language Grid to try a variety of registered language services. Examples of real-world challenges, such as the creation of community dictionaries, or real-world application of the Language Grid technologies, are also introduced through this website. *Language Grid Toolbox*, on the other hand, is a collection of modules to support multilingual communication in a community. Users can install this software on their servers to offer services, such as multilingual BBS and multilingual dictionary creation. Toolbox is provided as open source software. Therefore, the functions of Toolbox can be extended to meet the requirements of user communities. Furthermore, by using registered language services, existing communication tools can introduce multilingual functions easily. For instance, popular collaboration tools including LiquidThreads and NOTA have been successfully multilingualized.

1.4 User Involvement for Customization

1.4.1 Power of Customization

Computer scientists help to overcome language barriers by creating technologies as language services based on *generalization* of various language phenomena; user communities can then customize and use those technologies to fit their own context by composing language services. There are two reasons why *customization* is a major goal for the Language Grid.

First, machine translators are half-products. The obvious customization step is to combine multilingual dictionaries with machine translators. The provider of those dictionaries does not have to be a research institute or a university. Organizations that are conducting intercultural activities can also register their own multilingual dictionaries. The major difference between machine translation on the Language Grid and a conventional translation system on the Internet is that the users themselves can improve the quality of translation. For example, users can use the registered parallel texts in the translation process. When a user enters a sentence, examples with meanings similar to the entered sentence will appear automatically. If the user is unable to find the intended expression, machine translation is then executed. In this case, a dictionary registered by the user also helps to improve the quality of translation. If the quality of translation is not good enough, however, another user in the multilingual community might manually correct the translation results. The corrected parallel texts are accumulated so that the machine translator can learn from them. This becomes possible when the multilingual community members share their context. In this way, machine-translation-mediated communication might work better in high-context multicultural communities, such as an NPO/NGO working on particular international issues.

	士見中学校 多言語	語対話システム	္းမွာမွာ	Hello, Satoshi Sakai	
対話ログ					
				フォント: 小三 ログの削除	
Sendish Sendish			Japanese こんにちは、		
Hello. The next is time of technical training home economics, isn't				Here 1 12 1	
it? How about preparations?			次は技術・家庭科の時間だね。準備はどう?		
			私は、OHPスクリーンを準備する必要があるけれども、それ は非常に重い。私を助けてくれるか?		
you help me ? OK.			は非常に里い。私を助けてくれる) いいよ		
Thank you !!			ありがとう。!!	Chat Log	
し 入力画面					
 Japanese Chine 	se 🛎 Korean 🗏 English 🖾 S	panish red 💌	• Japanese 🔤 Chinese 🔅 Korean 📟	English 💶 Spanish 🛛 green 💆	
🥔 ссіє λ л			Деле Хл		
		×	場所は二階だっけ?	E	
		▼ 翻訳		▼ 翻訳	
1) 翻訳結果			翻訳結果		
			Is a place the second floor?		
		▼ 投稿		▼ 投稿	
◆」折り返し翻訳			◆ 折り返し翻訳		
		×	場所は2階であるか?		
		¥		Translation	
1 富士見中7	オリジナル辞書			-	
			一行の追加	一行の削除 ▼ ▶ 更新	
係からの連絡	小组长通知	연락사항			
			technical training home		
技術·家庭科	技术, 家政科	기술, 가정과	economics		
給食室	供食厨房	급식실			
給食台	午餐专用桌	급식대			
視聴覚室	视听教室	시청각실			
OHPスクリーン	投影机的屏幕	OHP스크린	OHP screen		
水飲み場	饮水处	물 마시는 곳			
のぼり棒	爬杆	오름대			
シーソー	跳跳板	시소	see-saw		
ジャングルジム	審登架	정글짐	jungle gym	Dictionary	
学芸会	学艺会	학예회		Diccionary	

Fig. 1.6 Shared screen multilingual chat system for junior high school

Second, we often observe that the success of a multilingual tool in one situation does not guarantee its success in another. Let us examine an example of customized environment for intercultural collaboration. Japan now has an increasing number of students who are non-native Japanese speakers, and most teachers have a problem in communicating with the foreign students and their parents. We provided a multilingual chat system for a distance meeting as a quick solution, but the system does not work well in face-to-face meetings. Therefore, we developed the service in which users can chat on the same screen. The support site, called a *shared screen multilingual chat system* (see Fig. 1.6), was designed specifically for this situation; students, parents and teachers can chat while looking at the same display. They can input text in their mother tongue, translate the sentence, check the back translation, and post it to the log area at the top of the page. In addition, users can register terms used in the school into the user dictionary, which makes the translation result more correct. This service also provides auto-completion using the parallel texts provided by the city office in charge of the school.

Though extensive dictionaries will help us to find the correct translations of given words, we seldom see people use dictionaries in a conversation. Since language is used everywhere in our daily life, we need customized tools for various situations. You may think that it is not possible to develop such tools customized for different user communities, and may claim that this is the reason that computer scientists provide a generalized solution to cover many different situations. However, the approach taken by the Language Grid is totally opposite. We try to create an environment that allows users to easily develop their own multilingual environments: *the language barrier created by billions of people can be overcome by those billions of people.* For example, the site in Fig. 1.6 was developed in two weeks by three master students. The example shows how quickly a customized multilingual environment can be created by using the language services provided via the Language Grid.

1.4.2 Participatory Design Project

To realize user involvement for customization, we organized a participatory design project that stressed collaboration among researchers, operators and users. At the beginning of the project, in parallel with forming the research project, we established the *Language Grid Association*, a user group of the Language Grid, to conduct multilingual activities on intercultural collaboration. The association is a loosely coupled organization formed by collaboration among industry, government, academia, and citizens with the goal of guiding the development of the Language Grid. Sixteen organizations including laboratories of universities, research institutes, and NPO/NGOs participated in the association. After development of the server software, operation of the Language Grid was commenced. Fig. 1.7 shows the three related organizations. NICT is working on R&D and provides software to the Operation Center run by Kyoto University. Language Grid Association uses the resulting language services and provides feedback to R&D.

The association consists of various SIGs (Special Interest Groups) such as research groups or projects, each of which aims to accumulate use cases and best practices. SIGs can be classified as *creating language services*, *creating collaboration tools* and *supporting multicultural activities* (Sakai et al 2008). Each SIG creates and shares technologies for using language services registered with the Language Grid. NPO/NGOs, schools and other nonprofit sectors have started to play a central role in breaking down the language barriers. Their activities cover a broad range of fields, including disaster management, education, and medical care (Ishida 2010).



Fig. 1.7 Participatory design project

1.5 Conclusion

The Language Grid is an infrastructure that allows end-users to create new language services for their intercultural collaboration activities. This chapter explained how the Language Grid increases the accessibility and usability of online language resources. Using the Language Grid, various kinds of intercultural activities have begun at hospital receptions, local schools, shopping streets and so on (Ishida et al. 2007) (Fussell et al. 2009).

In general, this chapter proposed the approach of using service-oriented collective intelligence to support the collection, sharing, and production of new services on the Internet while dealing with the issues of intellectual property rights. The main contributions of the proposed approach include the following two aspects.

- *Service architecture*: We developed the service architecture for the Language Grid, including layers of P2P grid infrastructure, atomic services, composite services, and application systems. The proposed architecture applies the service-oriented collective intelligence approach, where language resources including data and software are wrapped as Web services so that users can easily share and combine language resources for creating their own multilingual environment.
- User involvement: We proposed a participatory design approach for the formation of service-oriented collective intelligence by bringing the researchers, operators and end users together. Customization of the application systems based

on the Language Grid enables various users and communities to participate in the creation of new multilingual environments.

Our proposed service architecture can be applied to far more than just the language domain. In other domains, the proposed service architecture has been used or is being considered for use in the pervasive computing domain, e-learning domain and so on. In the pervasive computing domain, the open smart classroom has been developed (Suo et al. 2009). In the e-learning domain, open courseware services developed by different organizations can be provided and shared. To provide free usage in various domains, the Language Grid has been released as open source software.

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