



The Universal Networking Language (UNL): The Gateway to Disseminate Knowledge across Language Barriers.

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Abstract:

Many efforts have been exerted to disseminate knowledge about Biodiversity in accordance with the highlights of the Pan Arab Biodiversity Conference. These efforts include the creation of huge encyclopedias containing all the information necessary for people to understand what Biodiversity is and how they can protect it.

However, despite the magnitude of those efforts, they may be considered relatively minor. These references and encyclopedias reach only a limited number of people; in other words, they reach only the people speaking the language in which the reference is written and have access to such a reference. For this vital knowledge to be really universal, it should be accessible to all people regardless of their mother tongue or level of education. This sums up the ultimate goal of the Universal Networking Language (UNL).

The Universal Networking Language (UNL) is an initiative of the United Nations that represents means to overcome the barriers of linguistic differences. It is an artificial language for computers -which is different from a “computer language”- that encodes the content of any natural language text into UNL and then decodes it into any other natural language, enabling peoples to build the “banks” of human knowledge from and to diverse natural languages. The UNL System aims at a higher speed, easier and a more efficient understanding of information, this efficiency can be ascribable to the fact that it has components similar to that of a natural languages; it consists of Universal words (UWs) representing the vocabulary of the UNL, these UWs are inter-linked with each other to form UNL expressions; a set of relations and attributes representing the syntax of UNL; and the UNL knowledge base (UNL KB) which is the semantic component of the language. UNL design enables it to work over the internet; it consists of a network of multiple language servers - one server for each natural language – as well as UNL Editors and UNL Viewers. The language server of each language is responsible for converting a natural language text into UNL (EnConversion) and UNL into an equivalent natural language text (DeConversion). Using UNL, pages written in any language can be viewed in the user's natural language in a simple click.

The presentation will demonstrate how the UNL system works, the Arabic UNL infrastructure capable of generating the Arabic version of the Encyclopedia of Life (EOL) and pervious achievements in which the UNL was used in similar contexts.

Presentations' Abstracts